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Medicine Dream: Contemporary Native Music and Issues of Identity

by

Janice Esther Tulk

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Department of Music

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Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled Medicine Dream: Contemporary Native Music and Issues of Identity submitted by Janice Esther Tulk in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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Abstract

Identity formation and the representation of identity hold a significant place in current research. It is a particularly pressing issue in the case of Native Americans, who are attempting to reassert their own identity, often in opposition to one which has been ascribed to them by the dominant culture. Contemporary Native music provides an interesting space for the study of such issues.

The relationship of place to identity is indexed in contemporary Native music via poetic texts. However, themes and musical gestures also indicate the particularity and universality of such music. These issues are examined with specific reference to the music of Medicine Dream, a contemporary Native band based in Anchorage, Alaska, whose lead singer and composer, Paul Pike, is a Mi'kmaq from Newfoundland.

Contemporary Native music often combines aspects of both traditional Native culture and mainstream pop/rock movements. Such music can be conceived of as an authentic expression of the artist's participation in two worlds, one Native and the other the dominant white, which results in a way of relating to both worlds that has been described as double consciousness.

Such double consciousness is significant in the formation of identity and is expressed in a variety of ways, including dress and performance rituals. The visual aspects of performance and the narratives that contextualize music are important for the creation of collective memory among audience members, which results in a collective identity into which individuals find expression.

Dedicated to:

Michael Francis Dyer,

my beloved uncle,

always in my thoughts

and

forever missed.

"And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life."

Preface

Like Paul Pike, I was born and raised in Corner Brook, Newfoundland and became a musician. While Paul, who plays guitar, drums, and keyboards, was self-taught in a popular idiom, I was trained in the Western classical tradition, taking piano and voice lessons. My teachers guided the development of my musical abilities, abilities that led to concert and stage performances.

In the past two years, when I have spoken to my former music teachers, they have not been able to understand my transition from being a singer with performance engagements to an academic studying contemporary Native music. They do not understand why I am not performing in an opera or teaching private music lessons. "Are you still performing? Do you still take lessons? You know, if you give up singing, you'll lose everything you worked for." To these teachers, I wish to briefly explain the importance of the current path on which I travel.

Everything I have learned through my training as a singer has informed my current research in some way. I have not lost what I worked so hard to attain. The musicality, attention to nuance, aural training, and discipline required to succeed as a performer transfers directly to the field when learning about a new music. What has changed, is that now instead of sharing music with others in the context of a performance, I share my knowledge of music via the written word. I believe that knowing about many different musics informs the making of music.

In particular, my former teachers have found it difficult to understand my interest in Native music, why I would choose to give up a life of performing to learn about a music other than Western classical music. Opening oneself to the music of other cultures

leads to new social interactions and to an appreciation for the music and beliefs of people from around the world and at home. It can also result in the acquisition of new skills. In my case, it has resulted in a year of flamenco dance lessons and the ability to play the Native American flute.

Paul Pike, whose music and life experience is the focus of this thesis, is working to have the Native voice heard in Newfoundland, to have Native music recognized and appreciated in a land where it is largely unknown. He wants children to have the opportunity to learn about Native culture. I have become Paul's student and Paul has become my teacher, guiding my understanding of his music. Like Paul, I too want the blinders removed so that we all recognize that there is a whole world of music to be experienced. Music is a medium through which cultural understanding and the celebration of diversity can be realized. It is through my partnership with Paul that we hope to close the distance between the current situation in Newfoundland and our common goal.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I must thank Canyon Records' Recording Artists Medicine Dream. My deepest appreciation to Paul Pike, Steven Alvarez, Cea Anderson, Gilbert "Buz" Daney, John Field, and George Newton, for accepting me into their lives in Alaska and teaching me about contemporary Native music and Native culture. Thank you to Don LaVonne who shared his art with me, Linda who honoured me by inviting me to share in her special day at the Chickaloon powwow and bringing me to visit eagles at a rehabilitation centre, and to Aunt Dee for a fabulous day at Blues on the Green that included conversations that lifted my spirit. My sincerest gratitude to Paul, DeEtte Johnson, Kloiah, Elisa, and Deja for sharing their home with me. You have all affected my life in ways that words cannot begin to express.

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CJSR's listening audience.

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Table of Contents

Introduction 1

Chapter One
'mikmaqinak': Place, Identity, and Music 20

Chapter Two
Authenticity and Double Consciousness 44

Chapter Three
Medicine Dream and the Performance of Identity 70

Conclusion 92

Bibliography 98

Appendix A 105
Native Art

Appendix B 106
Mi'kmaq Eight-Point Star

Appendix C 109
Medicine Dream Concert

Appendix D 111
Biography of Paul Pike

Introduction

Whenever I begin to discuss my interest in contemporary Native music with someone, almost immediately I am asked how I, an obviously non-Native, red-haired, blue-eyed Newfoundlander, developed such an interest. Indeed, it was one of the first questions asked by John Field, a member of the band Medicine Dream, during his interview. Memory, of course, is a funny thing at times; it can appear as if something was always a part of you – you cannot remember a time when it was not there. Yet, at some point in your life, you were introduced to your current passion.

My first exposure to World Music[1] occurred at Memorial University of Newfoundland through a course taught by Dr. Kati Szego. This course, which focussed on the music of Africa and the Americas, quickly developed my appreciation for many different styles of music. Of most interest to me at that time were the syncretic musics I encountered. The term paper for the course afforded the opportunity to conduct an in-depth study of a single piece of music and my mind immediately turned to the music of Medicine Dream.

Not long before I started this course, my friend had played a CD of Native music for me. Her brother, Paul Pike, had released an independent recording in Alaska in 1998. I recalled the pop and rock stylings of the group intermingled with Native drumming and

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[1] I use the term World Music as a broad term referring to any music that is not Western classical music or North American popular music. It refers to both traditional musics and modern musics (often termed World Beat).

singing, and phoned Chrissy immediately. Within days Paul's CD had arrived in my mailbox and I was trying to understand how this music to which I had recently been introduced 'worked.'

Feeling unsatisfied with a purely musical analysis, I began to wonder how and why Paul chose to compose this music in the first place. Another quick call to Corner Brook and I was drafting an e-mail to Paul, whose alias at the time was "mikmaqinak."[2] Paul eagerly responded to my message, willing to teach me about his music and, specifically, the group's use of vocables in the song "Jalasi." Soon, my term paper was complete and I was returning to Corner Brook for the summer. To my delight, Paul would be visiting in July and performing at a Mi'kmaq cultural heritage day.

On Saturday, 24 July 1999, I drove to the centre of town to a place known as Majestic Lawn for what would be the first annual Elmastukwek Mi'kmaq Mawio'Mi. The sun was shining and the grass was a vibrant green. A flatbed truck served as a stage, equipment was scattered along its entire length. To the right, barbeques and coolers silently sat waiting to provide refreshments to all who joined the gathering. Directly in front of me, in the centre of the lawn, were the Sipu'ji'j Drummers from Conne River drumming and singing.

Throughout the afternoon, I learned about Mi'kmaq culture. Among those at the microphone educating the growing audience were Paul and a Mi'kmaq Elder. I watched the dancers, who were also visiting from Conne River, lead a round dance so that

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[2] The significance of this alias is explored in **Chapter One**.

everyone present could join in. Soon I was part of a large circle, largely comprised of people for whom this was an entirely new experience. As we danced, I felt that I was part of something significant.

As the afternoon progressed, I impatiently awaited the performance of Medicine Dream. While only Paul, the lead singer and composer, travelled from Alaska, there would be a full band performing complete renditions of Paul's music. Local musicians were prepared to take the stage, many of them playing a style of music that they had never even heard before.

The outdoor concert attracted an enormous audience, everyone intently listening to this new sound and celebrating the culture of the Mi'kmaq people of Western Newfoundland. Song after song, Paul's music was applauded by all. The day ended with an honour song, as all in attendance held hands in a circle around the drum. Later that night I joined the Pike family at their home to celebrate the success of the gathering. At this time, I gave Paul a dream catcher that I had made to thank him for all he had taught me via e-mail earlier in the year.

These first personal experiences have provided the impetus for a sustained interest in contemporary Native music, as well as Mi'kmaq culture. While the music touches my soul, it also provides nourishment for a curious mind, one that seeks to understand culture through the genesis of syncretic musics. In particular, I seek to understand the composer through the music he creates and the social context surrounding this creative process.

The following body of work represents my first attempt to immerse myself in the contemporary Native experience, my first understanding of Native issues by learning

from Native people. My approach has been to learn as much as possible from the people I met in Alaska. I am adopting Bryan Burton's (1993) use of the terms learning and research here. He notes that research is a "totally detached, formally structured style of investigation which is inappropriate for those who wish to immerse themselves in the total humanity of the Native American peoples," and that, "A learner 'becomes' part of the people from whom he or she learns."[3] The people who have taught me have become an important part of my life, and I have become part of them. For this reason, I balance the 'investigation' into Medicine Dream's music with short narratives of experiences that I have had with the people who have taught me.

Certainly, such interactive education is an important factor in achieving a strong identity, because with knowledge comes strength. Cea Anderson, a former member of Medicine Dream, explains,

> People need to think past the material world and more of the inward world that we have inside us. And that that identity, if we strengthen that identity and we get back to basics where we came from, it's going to help us. If we have elders who are still alive, we need to listen to them, and maybe record their languages or record their stories, and keep those and teach those to our children. Because that would be the best gift we could give them.[4]

Such a gift would bring with it a sense of history, of belonging, and of identity. Cea has

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[3] Bryan Burton, *Moving Within the Circle: Contemporary Native American Music and Dance.* (Danbury, CT: World Music Press, 1993), p. 13.

[4] Cea Anderson, Personal Interview, 2002.

embarked on an educational journey into her heritage and feels a stronger sense of identity because she has learned the dance, songs, stories, and languages of her ancestors. Committed to education, Cea sends culture bearers into schools to work with children, and requires that each one talk about identity and tolerance. For her, a strong identity is an outgrowth of strong self-worth, and leads to less drug and alcohol abuse. By learning more about Native culture from Cea, as well as the other members of Medicine Dream, I have learned more about myself and my own identity.

Before proceeding to the body of my research, clarification regarding the terms used throughout is necessary. First and foremost is the use of the term identity. In her 1999 article on kinship, Susan Applegate Krouse defines identity as being "both who you are as an individual and the community to which you belong."[5] Raymond Fogelson's definition echoes hers; he points out that identity "refers to an image or set of images of oneself or one's group," and notes that this identity changes with different contexts.[6] My concern here is not so much how one's identity changes when one enters a group situation, but how an individual's identity finds expression in the group situation. Further, I do not conceive of identity as Fogelson does, noting the various multiple identities possible, including the "ideal" (something to which Native people strive) and the "real" (that which is perceived to be a true representation), because applying such labels to a

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[5] Susan Applegate Krouse, "Kinship and Identity: Mixed Bloods in Urban Indian Settings," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 23 (1999), p. 74.

[6] Raymond D. Fogelson, "Perspectives on Native American Identity," in Russell Thornton, ed., *Studying Native American: Problems and Prospects* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998), p. 41.

person's identity fragments it into many pieces.[7] My approach to identity is all-encompassing, noting that many parts create the whole.

Debra L. Merskin (1996) in discussing her own experience as a "mixed-blood," explains that, "Soul and face and body, words and action contribute to our identity."[8] Identity, then, includes physical representations of oneself, as well as what one says about one's identity and how one's actions reinforce or contest this identity. Steven Crum, a Native artist, has said that by maintaining a Native identity, Natives are maintaining their roots.[9] Identity, then, is linked with a past, with history. Diamond (1994) conceives of identity as a result of social interactions extending across boundaries.[10] Such social interactions extend through the generations, which in turn creates the history, the 'rootedness' referred to by Crum.

For Paul Pike, identity is who you are and identifying your roots, the people you come from. With the CD *Identity*, Paul was attempting to express just this:

> *Identity*. I think for myself, I was looking at not only myself being raised in an environment that was for Native culture, not okay. It was not okay to be Native. And it was not okay to express it. For myself it was an internal wanting to express it. I know there are a lot of people who are probably

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[7] Fogelson, "Perspectives," p. 41.

[8] Debra Merskin, "What Does One Look Like?" in S. Elizabeth Bird, ed., *Dressing in Feathers: The Construction of the Indian in American Popular Culture* (Boulder,CO: Westview Press, 1996), p. 28.

[9] Lois Crozier-Hogel, Darryl Babe Wilson, and Steven Crum, "Steven Crum: How Beautiful is Our Land," in Lois Crozier-Hogel, Darryl Babe Wilson, and Jay Leibold, eds., *Surviving in Two Worlds: Contemporary Native American Voices* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997), p. 77.

[10] Beverley Diamond, "Introduction: Issues of Hegemony and Identity in Canadian Music," in Beverley Diamond and Robert Witmer, eds., *Canadian Music: Issues of Hegemony and Identity* (Toronto: Canadian Scholars Press, 1994), p. 16.

> just like me, who come from a mixed blood family, who have this part of them, this hunger that needs to be fed. So, I was screaming out, "This is who I am. These are the people I come from." And that's where *Identity* came from. There are a lot of people out there who are looking to find themselves.[11]

Paul's interpretation of identity, then, is knowing about your background and being able to express it without prejudice. This resonates with Diamond's relational concept of identity, of the social nature of identity. Further, Paul explains that it is about expressing his own view as to who he is, about Native people determining their own identity, instead of having other people determine and assign an identity to them. The act of finding oneself acknowledges the fact that identity does not simply exist but is a journey of discovery, a process which lasts a lifetime.

Perhaps the most important scholarly contribution to the literature on identity, from my standpoint, is that of Zygmunt Bauman. Like Diamond, he points to the social nature of identity, noting that "individuality is socially produced."[12] Where Bauman's work diverges, however, is in his use of the terms 'individualization' and 'identification'. In this way, he orients his definition around process and points out that identity is not a static object, but is a dynamic process that is constantly in negotiation.[13] Therefore, the actors involved have agency in determining the identity they assume. Such identification,

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[11] Paul Pike, Personal Interview, 2002.

[12] Zygmunt Bauman, "Identity in the Globalizing World," in Eliezer Ben-Rafael and Yitzak Sternberg, *Identity, Culture, and Globalization* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2001), p. 474.

[13] Bauman, "Identity," p. 477. See also Stuart Hall, "The Local and the Global: Globalization and Ethnicity," in Anthony D. King, ed., *Culture, Globalization and the World-System: Contemporary Conditions for the Representation of Identity* (Binghamton, NY: State University of New York at Binghamton, Department of Art and History, 1991), p. 47.

according to Hall (1991) is a process through which individuals determine how they are the same as and different from others.[14] Sameness, then, is an important aspect of identity in that it allows a person to claim a particular heritage or membership in a group, or a shared heritage or experience.

For the purposes of this study, identity will be taken in the broadest sense of the term, incorporating both the identity produced through social interactions and that which evolves out of the history of a people, since history itself is a social construct. Visual indicators of identity , as well as the ideas one has about one's identity and the manner in which these ideas manifest, will be part of a comprehensive approach to identity.

Since this paper focusses on the relationship between identity and contemporary Native music, it is necessary to explain what is meant by 'contemporary' in this context. This usage of the term 'contemporary' does not merely refer to new music; rather, it specifically refers to music that combines traditional[15] Native music with popular[16] influences which manifest in the use of non-traditional styles, forms, genres, and/or instruments.[17] Contemporary Native music, then, requires that there be a syncretic aspect

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[14] Stuart Hall, "The Local and the Global: Globalization and Ethnicity," in Anthony D. King, ed., *Culture, Globalization and the World-System: Contemporary Conditions for the Representation of Identity* (Binghamton, NY: State University of New York at Binghamton, Department of Art and History, 1991), p. 47.

[15] By traditional, I am referring to Native music that makes use of drum, rattles, and singing in regional styles.

[16] The term popular refers to North American popular music.

[17] See Judith Gray, "Contemporary Musics," in Ellen Koskoff, ed., *Garland Encyclopedia of World Music Volume Three: The United States and Canada* (New York: Garland Publishing, 2001), pp. 488-90.

to the music, some combination of elements from two or more different musical genres or styles. While fusion is an indicator of contemporary Native music among scholars, it is also considered to be a defining factor according to the music industry. Davin Seay, writer for *Billboard*, notes that the fusion heard in contemporary Native music results in "music that, while it could be called jazz, new age or anything else, still retains its cultural identity."[18]

Lynn Whidden (1996), while surveying Native recordings, noted that the pressures of capitalist society resulted in "music that sells on the popular music market and has little in common with Native music of the past."[19] While this may be true for a small percentage of contemporary Native music, such a broad-sweeping comment does not reflect the true nature of much contemporary Native music. This music is sometimes interpreted as 'non-traditional' music; however, I prefer to conceive of it as a synthesis of traditional music with popular elements. There is a perceived contradiction that contemporary music cannot be traditional, yet often traditional instruments, drumming styles, and languages are used in contemporary music. To term this non-traditional, then, is misleading. Further, the idea of what is 'traditional,' and therefore 'authentic,' is problematic in itself, a topic to be further discussed in **Chapter Two**.

The connection between contemporary Native music and recorded music must also be considered here. Does the term 'contemporary' imply 'recorded'? While there is

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[18] Davin Seay, "The Big Picture Develops and Diversifies," *Billboard* 110.30 (1998), 22.

[19] Lynn Whidden, "Sound Recordings Review Essay: North American Native Music," *Journal of American Folklore* 109 (1996), p. 194.

some correlation between contemporary Native music and recorded Native music, it cannot be generalized that one requires the other. There is much recorded Native music that is not contemporary and is part of an active tradition of live performance. For example, powwow music is live music for dancing, but recordings of it have been made, and there are recordings of traditional flute music as well. Contemporary Native music is often recorded, but also exists within the realm of live performance. This music can and does exist without being recorded. Certainly, there are examples of contemporary music that requires mediation to exist. For example, the CD *Enter>>Tribal* (2002) features music recorded live at a powwow that is combined with synthesizers and treated to over-dubbing and a plethora of special effects. This music can only exist within the recording process. However, the music of Medicine Dream, which is the focus of this study, does not make use of such mediation effects. Thus, while we must keep the connection between contemporary and recorded music in mind throughout the study, the use of the term contemporary does not require an association with recorded music.

The final immediate concern regarding terminology is the multitude of terms available to refer to Native people: Native, Native American, First Nations, First People, Aboriginal, Indian, and Amerindian. The issue here when choosing which term to use is that the term stands in for a person and says something about the relationship between that person and the writer. The challenge is to find a term that shows respect and does not perpetuate hegemony, unequal power relations. Native American is a currently preferred term in the United States, while First Nations is a currently preferred term in Canada. Paul himself used many of the terms I use interchangeably, such as Native, Native

American, First Nations, and Aboriginal, throughout our interactions. He also called himself an Indian; however, this is not a term that I will use because of the negative connotations it can have when used by a non-Native person, as well as the confusion which ensues since it can also refer to people from India. It is important to note that, whatever the term selected, the labelling itself is a hegemonic process. These terms considered, background on the musical group Medicine Dream will set the stage for my study on contemporary Native music and identity.

Medicine Dream was formed in Anchorage, Alaska in 1996. Its members are descendants of several different indigenous groups, including representatives of the Mi'kmaq, Aleut, Inupiaq, Lakota, Yup'ik, and Apache Nations, as well as one non-Native performer who is of German and Scandinavian heritage. Paul Pike, the group's primary composer, lead vocalist, and musician, grew up in Corner Brook, Newfoundland playing popular music on an electric guitar. After moving to Alaska, he became involved in traditional Native music while still performing popular music. Paul envisioned a fusion of the two and formed Medicine Dream. Their music uses English texts and vocables as a common language among the different indigenous groups and is a synthesis of traditional instruments (flutes and drums) with rock and popular elements (electric guitar, bass, and keyboard). Their first album (entitled *Identity*) appeared in 1998, and reveals a syncretic[20]

[20] I use the syncretic, hybrid, and fusion to describe a type of music, one that combines elements from two or more distinct styles or genres. I do not use it to imply any political meaning or hegemonic frameworks. I have chosen to limit my use of these terms to the way in which musicians themselves use them.

style that points to the group's inter-tribal[21] composition, as well as its interaction with a variety of popular music styles.

In 2000, the group released their second album (and first recording with Canyon Records), entitled *Mawio'Mi* (Mi'kmaq meaning 'Gathering'). This album increasingly emphasizes Paul Pike's Mi'kmaq heritage in both the cover design, a piece of quill work displaying a Mi'kmaq eight-point star made by Paul which he wears on his regalia, and the liner notes which provide background information on the plight of the Mi'kmaq people of Newfoundland. The recently released *Tomegan Gospem* (2002) makes a political statement about the government of Newfoundland and its treatment of the Mi'kmaq people, addressing issues such as the mercenary myth (colonial powers taught school children until the 1980s that the Mi'kmaq had massacred the Beothuk people),[22] the residential schools, and the idea that the only indigenous people of Newfoundland are the now-extinct Beothuk. It also uses the Mi'kmaq language for some of the lyrics and includes instrumental works which were inspired by places in *Ktagmkuk* (Newfoundland).

The music of Medicine Dream raises several interesting questions related to issues of identity. Perhaps the most obvious is that of place. Paul himself has indicated numerous times that if he had started Medicine Dream in Newfoundland, the project would not have succeeded. Why was success possible in Alaska and not in

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[21] The term inter-tribal refers to traditional Native music, but not any one specific tradition. It may incorporate musical characteristics of many Native traditions. It is term that Paul uses to describe the group's composition, as a group with members of many backgrounds, as well as the music they perform.

Newfoundland? It must be duly noted that while Alaska has a large indigenous population which includes Aleut, Alutiq, Yup'ik, Inupiaq, Tlingit, Haida, Athapaska, and Tsimsian, the Mi'kmaq people are Eastern Woodlands and live primarily on the East Coast of North America. How does music about the Mi'kmaq people sung in the Mi'kmaq language find an audience in an area that might initially seem to have no connection to it? Particularly relevant here is how music can be 'placed' (local) and 'placeless' (global) at the same time.[23]

Indigenous musicians and artists are often labelled as either 'traditional' or 'contemporary,' indicating two different levels of authenticity. Some people believe that traditional ways must remain the same for all time, forbidding any cultural change; yet, change can be part of tradition. There is a growing number of Native artists who are incorporating new styles and sounds into their music. How is this new music 'authentic' and for whom is it 'authentic'? While this is a difficult question, it is a necessary one since a similar shift in Native arts such as carving is occurring with the use of new materials, methods, and technologies. John Hoover, for example, portrayed Raven the Creator in a metal statue while Don LaVonne creates Native jewellery cast in gold and silver. In what ways are such artistic expressions traditional? Contemporary? Native? The combination of old and new, of traditional and non-traditional in music such as Medicine

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[22] This myth is further discussed in **Chapter Three**.

[23] Andrew Leyshon, David Matless, and George Revill, "Music, Space, and the Production of Place," in Andrew Leyshon, David Matless, and George Revill, eds., *The Place of Music* (New York: Guilford Press, 1998), pp. 1-30.

Dream's finds a parallel in the visual arts.

For Paul, this combination is the natural progression of culture which results from living in both the Native world and that of the colonizers. Much literature about the Aboriginal experience describes a two-ness of identity, such as *Surviving in Two Worlds: Contemporary Native American Voices*.[24] In an effort to maintain Indian identity in a changing world, a movement towards Pan-Indianism emerged creating such groups as the Society for American Indians. These societies included both Native Americans and non-Native members who sympathized with them. Among the non-Native members was W. E. B. DuBois, who developed a theory of double-consciousness to describe the experience of African-Americans in America (*The Souls of Black Folk*). William Cross studied the different social experiences that influence the choices an African American makes regarding his identity. His theories were successfully applied to Aboriginals and their identity formation by Devon A. Mihesuah (1999) in an effort to illuminate Aboriginal issues of identity.

How, then, can the work of DuBois illuminate the Native American experience and, more specifically, the syncretism found in the music of Medicine Dream? How is the two-ness of identity performed in the context of a concert? Medicine Dream is a musical group that performs live. Do performance rituals exist? How do their actions and dress display their diverse identities? In performance, individual and collective identities are

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[24] Lois Crozier-Hogle, Darryl Babe Wilson, and Jay Leibold, eds., *Surviving in Two Worlds: Contemporary Native American Voices* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997).

necessarily negotiated. In the context of a public concert which includes both Native and non-Native audience members, how do the members of Medicine Dream portray their individual identities as members of different indigenous groups as well as their collective identity as Native people? Further, how do related materials, such as CD covers, posters, and websites, portray identity?

The material for this study was collected on a fieldtrip to Anchorage, Alaska (2002) during which I conducted interviews with members of the band and engaged in participant-observation, attending the band's rehearsals and a performance. Much information was shared and an understanding developed during informal conversations with Paul Pike. I also observed and participated in the Native environment by attending the Chickaloon Powwow, the Anchorage Blues Festival, which featured the Native blues group, Indigenous, and a Native dinner with special guest Chief Arvol Looking Horse. These experiences form the basis for a study of contemporary Native music and issues of identity in which theoretical concepts will be applied to shed light on how these issues pertain to the group Medicine Dream.

In the past decade, modern Native music has become an area of research which illuminates issues of identity. Beverley Diamond (1994) notes that music is a significant aspect of identity formation among Native peoples. Her more recent work (2002) examines the role of women in contemporary Native music. Focussing on Lawrence Martin, a Cree musician, and the Innu band Kashtin, Christopher Scales (1999) links contemporary Native music with the construction of native identity. He suggests that their music provides their communities with a sense of identity and empowerment; it enables

First Nations people to define and express their own identity and to contest the negative stereotypes surrounding Native culture. Adam Krims' (2000) work on rap music and identity discusses Native rapper Bannock, whose style is influenced by American rap as a form of social protest and whose lyrics display a pride in his Cree heritage. The common thread between these performers is the communication of identity through music.[25]

The study of the expression and construction of identity through contemporary Native music is part of a larger discourse on Native identity which has focussed on a wide range of topics. In particular, the relationship of powwow music to identity has been addressed by Burton (1993) and Mattern (1999). A powwow tradition grew out of the pan-Indian movement of the early Twentieth Century. Hertzberg (1971) provides an extensive history of the development of this movement and its effect on Native identity. The development of Native art and modern art movements has been studied by Tom Hill and Richard Hill (1994), while the relationship of the arts to Native healing was the focus of scholarship by Dufrene (1990).

The general history and traditions of Native peoples has been addressed by many scholars. A survey of scholarly research on First Nations people of Canada was assembled by Morrison and Wilson (1995), while Oswalt's *This Land Was Theirs* (1988) provides a survey of the research surrounding the Native Americans in the United

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[25] See also David P. McAllester, "New Perspectives in Native American Music," *Perspectives of New Music* 20 (1981), pp. 433-46, for a study of the use of vocables by performers as markers of ethnicity.

States.[26] Both books include general discussions of Native life and experiences, as well as chapters devoted to specific groups and regions.

An important and more specific issue in the discourse on Native identity is that of alcohol abuse and addiction. The impact of alcohol has been devastating to the Native population and has been addressed by Eduardo and Bonnie Duran in the book *Native American Post-Colonial Psychology* (1995).[27] Alcohol and Native identity was also addressed by May (1999) in a collection of essays entitled *Contemporary Native American Cultural Issues*.[28] In his essay, May examines the biological and environmental elements that lead to alcohol use, abuse, and addiction.

Finally, much attention has been given to the issue of the commodification of Native identity. Both the image and the music of Native Americans has been commodified in many ways, not the least of which is the use of their image for sports teams (e.g. the Atlanta Braves and the Edmonton Eskimos). The image of Native Americans has also been exploited in children's cartoons such as *Pocahontas* and *The Indian in the Cupboard*.[29] Further, these children's shows make use of Native music or

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[26] See also Alice B. Kehoe, *North American Indians: A Comprehensive Account* (Englewoods Fliff, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1992).

[27] See also Bonnie Duran, Eduardo Duran, and Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart, "Native Americans and the Trauma of History," in Russell Thornton, ed., *Studying Native America: Problems and Prospects* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998), pp. 60-76.

[28] Phillip A. May, "The Epidemiology of Alcohol Abuse Among Native Americans: The Mythical and Real Properties," in Duane Champagne, ed., *Contemporary Native American Cultural Issues* (Walnut Creek, California: Altamira Press, 1999), pp 227-44.

[29] See Pauline Turner Strong, "Animated Indians: Critique and Contradiction in Commodified Children's Culture," *Cultural Anthropology* 11 (1996), pp. 405-24.

Native-inspired music, such as a beating drum and chanting. Whitt (1999) notes the inadequacy of copyright law when dealing with Native music and Native beliefs regarding ownership of music.

The above has outlined merely a fraction of the work that has been done in the area of Native identity and is not meant to provide a comprehensive overview of current research. While the present study adds to this growing body of scholarship, it also contributes to that of the anthropology of place by applying well-established theories of place and music to a specific example of contemporary Native music. In this work, I attempt to understand the artistic output of the group Medicine Dream, with attention to what they say about their Native identities, in and effort to inform the larger theory of double consciousness which results from living in two worlds. Finally, it examines the ways in which performance artists perform their identities.

Chapter One will engage with issues of identity formation and music, with a focus on place. The discussion will be framed by theoretical concepts created by such scholars as Lipsitz (1994) and Leyshon, Matless, and Revill (1998). **Chapter Two** will investigate issues of authenticity in contemporary Native music and the arts in general. Artists find themselves influenced by and participants in two worlds, one Native and the other the dominant white, creating a form of 'double consciousness.' The identities of Native American artists will be placed within the framework of DuBois' concept of double consciousness and their music investigated in terms of Moore's (2002) framework of 'authentication.' Having considered the identities constructed by the musicians in Medicine Dream, the way in which these identities are performed in their professional life

will be examined in **Chapter Three**, followed by concluding remarks.

Chapter One
'mikmaqinak': Place, Identity, and Music

As I recalled in the introduction, Paul's e-mail alias when I first contacted him was 'mikmaqinak.' For quite some time, I tried, rather unsuccessfully, to figure out how to pronounce it and what it meant. Then one day I realised what I was typing every time I e-mailed him – Mi'kmaq in Alaska.

It was not until the Spring of 2002 that I realised a certain significance to being a Mi'kmaq in Alaska. My second week there I spent a great deal of time with Paul. I learned much from him about his Native culture, his music, and the audience for his music. Most often, this learning occurred while driving around Anchorage or on the highway to Wasilla through informal conversations. Several themes recurred in our conversations each time we met, the most significant being that of place.

My first day with Paul started with a trip to a recording studio where he was recording commercials for a local business. Once they were finished, we went to a diner called Blondies for breakfast. It was here that Paul first described Newfoundland as 'colonial.' At first I was not quite certain what he meant; however, it soon all became clear. By colonial, Paul was referring to the fact that the only acknowledged culture in Newfoundland is that of the English and Irish (Celtic). He felt that there was no cultural diversity there, but found in Alaska the multiculturalism on which he thrives.

Two days later, our conversation regarding the 'colonial' nature of Newfoundland continued. It was then that Paul told me that he believes, and has been told by others, that if he had tried to start Medicine Dream in Newfoundland, it never would have happened

and would still be a dream. The music is 'too different' for the people there. Reiterating the Irish-centric nature of Newfoundland, Paul pointed out the incredibly strong ties that exist between Newfoundland and Ireland. But he noted that the Newfoundland population is far more diverse than merely Irish. Mi'kmaq music is rarely aired on the radio[1] and during the Newfoundland hour, only Irish-Newfoundland music is played.[2] The Native population is not the only one ignored in this manner; little French music is aired on radio stations. It was in Alaska, a place of encouraged and visible multiculturalism, of a strong Native population, of radio support for Native musicians,[3] that Medicine Dream could flourish.

The relationship of place to identity and music has been a prominent issue in popular music studies, as well as musical ethnographies. Feld (1996) has noted the importance of place in the music-making of the Kaluli people whose environmental soundscape provides the 'lift-up-over sounding' model that shapes musical expressions as well as social interactions.[4] Lipsitz (1994) has focussed on the poetics of place in relation to popular music and the way in which they create a space for political commentary. This social aspect of music is particularly relevant to the present study.

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[1] Such music is usually heard only prior to special events, such as the Mi'kmaq gathering, and even then only popular forms are heard, not traditional.

[2] Hence, this hour on Sunday is referred to as the Irish-Newfoundland show.

[3] KNBA is a Native radio station in Alaska. For more information or to listen online, see www.knba.org.

[4] Steven Feld, "Waterfalls of Song: An Acoustemology of Place Resounding in Bosavi, Papua New Guinea," in Steven Feld and Keith Basso, eds., *Sense of Place* (New Mexico: School of American Research, 1996), pp. 91-135.

Lipsitz notes that as a music of the African diaspora, hip hop "serves as a conduit for ideas and images articulating subaltern sensitivities."[5] Further, while such music is part of a local identity, it has a global reach in its message and themes. His study of New Orleans Blacks presenting themselves as Indians during Mardi Gras displays the connectedness of local to global. By temporarily adopting the identity of the Indian, Blacks are united under the general canopy of 'minority', thereby shifting their identity to that of a majority of united oppressed people. Lipsitz notes that fusion in music as a result of interaction with other cultures is a manner in which musicians are "claiming citizenship in a larger artistic and political world." [6] In this way, local music has global consequences.

It is this local-global relationship that was conceived of as "particular" and "universal" by Leyshon, Matless, and Revill (1998).[7] Universal music or 'placeless' music, has some autonomy and exists as music for all, while particular music is 'placed' and exhibits strong ties to a place in terms of style and poetics, as well as the manner in which it is experienced. Particularly interesting to me is the way in which lyrics indicate place. This may occur with direct references to a place by saying proper names, but is also referenced by language or dialect because they are tied to place, either nationally or regionally.

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[5] George Lipsitz, *Dangerous Crossroads: Popular Music, Postmodernism and the Poetics of Place* (London, New York: Verso, 1994), p. 36.

[6] George Lispsitz, *Dangerous Crossroads*, p. 90.

[7] Andrew Leyson et al., *Music, Place and the Production of Place*, p. 9. See also Adam Krims,

Anthony D. King (1991) notes that as ethnic and cultural groups move or are moved from their homelands, a strong sense of local identity becomes even more problematic: "It is not just that, increasingly, many people have no roots; it's also that they have no soil. Culture is increasingly deterritorialized."[8] Place is particularly important for Native identity and is a complex issue. Native people were the first people of this land, yet many have few or no rights to the land they originally inhabited. Native peoples have been fighting to reclaim their ancestral lands and places of spiritual importance for centuries. M. Annette Jaimes (1994) notes the connectedness of this struggle to identity: "Because we are indigenous to the Americas, our cultural identity is rooted in the land, in the environment, in our nationhood."[9] For Natives, the land is their means of survival through subsistence living. Further, it is a place where rituals occur, where social functions take place, and is an important aspect of healing. The entire environment surrounding Natives has a significant role in their lives, and in the past provided shelter for families. Finally, the land is spiritually important because it is the final resting place of the people. Native people, unlike Euro-Americans, do not think of land in terms of a commodity, something which can be owned. For them, it is their birthplace, their home, and their final resting place, and therefore takes on great spiritual

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Rap Music and the Poetics of Identity (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

[8] Anthony D. King, "Spaces of Culture, Spaces of Knowledge," in Anthony D. King, ed., *Culture, Globalization and the World System* (Binghamton: State University of New York, Department of Art and Art History, 1991), p. 6.

[9] M. Annette Jaimes, "American Racism: The Impact on American-Indian Identity and Survival," in Steven Gregory and Roger Sanjek, eds., *Race* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1994), p. 57.

significance.[10]

While the group Medicine Dream is physically based in Alaska, its music is placed in Newfoundland. Thus, it is important to note from the start that the location where a music is produced is not necessarily the place being referenced or for which it is produced. Language, themes, and references to places in Newfoundland all contribute to the particularity of Paul Pike's music. Paul uses the Mi'kmaq language, especially on the album *Tomegan Gospem*, to refer to a specific people, the people who understand it. Some of the Mi'kmaq words used in songs and as titles for songs are direct references to places that are significant for Paul. For example, *Ktaqmkuk* is the Mi'kmaq word for Newfoundland which translates as "the far shore over the waves." Further, *Tomegan Gospem* is an area in Newfoundland that is also known as Gabriel's Lake, "the traditional caribou hunting territory of the Gabriel family."[11] Paul is a descendent of the Gabriel family and in this instrumental piece portrays his ancestral relationship to this location. Location is intricately linked with the identity of a person and the naming of specific locales reinforces the significance of place in relation to a person's identity.

Expanding upon the idea that referring to specific places in a song places the music, I suggest that references to political leaders of an area also locates the music in a particular place. One of Paul's songs makes reference to Joey Smallwood, a former Premier of Newfoundland and one of the fathers of the Canadian Confederation. The

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[10] Raymond Fogelson, "Perspectives on Native American Identity," p. 48.

[11] Medicine Dream, *Tomegan Gospem* (Canyon Records, 2002).

reference to this political leader, "Joey Smallwood was wrong, he was so wrong. We've been here all along," points to fact that during the negotiations that led to confederation, Smallwood did not secure any rights for the Mi'kmaq people of the island, or the Innu and Inuit of Labrador. Some of the Mi'kmaq migrated to Newfoundland, probably in the 1760s,[12] but Aboriginal status was not granted them until the 1984.[13] Jerry Wetzel's (2002) and Harald E. L. Prins' (1998) research speaks to the abdication of financial and constitutional responsibility of government in dealing with the Mi'kmaq people of Newfoundland; the Indian Act was never enacted in Newfoundland.[14] While some Canadians may recognize the Smallwood name, it is unlikely that the Alaskan audience would have knowledge of the history of confederation or of Smallwood. This reference, then, firmly locates Medicine Dream's music in Newfoundland and is directed at the broader listening audience as a means of educating them.

In the same manner, using the term *L'nuk* refers to a specific people located in Newfoundland. The *L'nuk* are the Mi'kmaq people of *Ktaqmkuk*, as Paul points out in the song "Time Immemorial": "We are the *L'nuk*, our home is known as *Ktaqmkuk*, but

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[12] Dennis A. Bartels and Olaf Uwe Janzen, "Micmac Migration to Western Newfoundland," *Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 10 (1990), pp. 71-96.

[13] C. Roderick Wilson and R. Bruce Morrison, "Taking Stock: Legacies and Prospects," in R. Bruce Morrison and C. Roderick Wilson, eds., *Native Peoples: The Canadian Experience* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1995), p. 628. See also Adrian Tanner, "History and Culture in the Generation of Ethnic Nationalism," in Michael D. Levin, ed., *Ethnicity and Aboriginality Case Studies in Ethnonationalism* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), p. 79.

[14] Jerry Wetzel, "The Hidden Term of Union: The Federal Decision to Abandon its Constitutional Responsibility for the Welfare of the Newfoundland Mi'kmaq in 1949," Online (2002), and Harald E. L. Prins, "We Fight with Dignity: the Miawpukek Mi'kmaq Quest for Aboriginal Rights in Newfoundland," in *Algonquian Conference* (1998), pp. 283-305.

somebody came and called it Newfoundland." Here the term that refers to only the Mi'kmaq of Newfoundland is immediately followed by a place locator, demonstrating how intricately linked identity is to place.

While this music is obviously locally placed, it is at the same time universal or placeless. Often it is the messages in songs sung by Medicine Dream that are noted as being universal. Specifically Paul is describing the experience of the Mi'kmaq people. However, the message is also heard and understood universally; other Native people can relate to it. When asked how he relates to Paul's music and the themes featured therein, George Newton, a member of Medicine Dream who is of Aleut and Inupiaq heritage, replied that the music speaks to "generally everybody."[15] The concerns that are expressed in the music, of the changes that occurred in Native life after contact with Europeans, of the oppression they suffered at the hands of the Europeans, are understood by all oppressed peoples. George explains:

> Hearing Paul's stories of what's happened back there, a lot of false truths, people not understanding where they came from, acknowledgement of who they are, crosses over to a lot of people who are just trying to find their own identity. You know, music is a strong way of expressing via words, if not in a musical sense, that understanding of what happened to a certain people. The commonality of everybody in some way or another means everybody could easily understand the stories of the Mi'kmaq people, be it all they've gone through, how they've persevered, and how they're refining themselves in today's society. It's very similar to where my heritage comes from. As much as Paul's on a journey, I myself am on a journey.[16]

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[15] George Newton, Personal Interview, 2002.

[16] George Newton, Personal Interview, 2002.

In general, there was a feeling of universality in Paul's music and its message. While the members of the group have not lived the Mi'kmaq experience, enough similarity exists in the oppression of Native people in general that they could relate to it. Cea Anderson expressed her personal connection with the music she performs as part of Medicine Dream:

> When [Paul] speaks of the problems that his people have had, I understand. I know about my blood line. My great-grandmother was relocated off the Aleutian Islands in the forties, when the Japanese attacked. When the Japanese attacked the Aleutian Islands, they moved everyone who was an eighth value or more and evacuated them off the Island. And they went into camps, and when they were in these camps they didn't have adequate water and sanitation, so the elders and the children passed. There were a lot of grave markers left there. My great-grandmother passed in that camp. There's a kind of sadness that comes with all that and I think it's something that's left in you, but you can't really explain it. But you know that your people have suffered a lot of sadness and that you might carry that in your heart.[17]

It is this suffering that has generally been felt by all Native peoples oppressed by people outside their cultures. It is a common theme that they can relate to. Steven Alvarez, the band's drummer, makes this point more overtly:

> Well, I can relate to a lot of [Paul's music] because most of the issues in one Native group pretty much are the same issues with all Native groups, dealing with the loss of sovereignty, the loss of land, dealing with a warped view or historical writings in history books or Hollywood, stereotyping. I can relate to a lot of it, because they're pretty much Native issues across the board. The Mi'kmaq people, there may be specific issues that they are dealing with, but you can find those same kind of issues in one aspect or another with most Native groups.[18]

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[17] Cea Anderson, Personal Interview, 2002.

[18] Steven Alvarez, Personal Interview, 2002.

Gilbert "Buz" Daney, who provides tradition vocals and drumming for the group's music, in much the same way notes that the issues that the Mi'kmaq have faced are similar to those that Alaska Natives have endured.[19] He also pointed out the atrocities perpetrated on the Choctaw people when they were relocated to Oklahoma, a journey during which many died. The themes of Paul's music and the issues he addresses, though specifically referring to and describing the Mi'kmaq experience, are widely understood by Native people in general. They are the issues that all Native nations face.

Edward H. Spicer's work (1961) focussing on contact and change among Native American communities is particularly relevant to the present study. Spicer notes that contact between Native Americans and Europeans was a combination of social interaction and cultural integration which had a variety of distinct results.[20] Contact can be distinguished along the lines of "directed" and "non-directed," the former implying a power relationship in which the superordinate wants to change the subordinate and the latter implying that the actors involved have some control over the extent to which the other culture interferes with their own.[21]

He further delineates the types of contact along the lines of cultural integration and social integration. Within cultural integration are incorporation (transferring elements into another culture while maintaining the original context or associations), assimilation

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[19] Gilbert "Buz" Daney, Personal Interview, 2002.

[20] Edward H. Spicer, "Types of Contact and Processes of Change," in Edward H. Spicer, ed., *Perspectives in American Indian Culture Change* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), p. 519.

[21] Edward H. Spicer, "Types of Contact," p. 520.

(replacement/adoption of behaviours), fusion (combining two traditions into one without being directed by the dominant society), or compartmentalization (incorporating elements without necessarily the context that surrounds them in the original culture). Social integration takes the form of a merge between distinct social groups (e.g. intermarriage), biculturation (participating in two cultures in distinct ways), or additive integration (where there are increasing levels of integration of the outside culture).[22] Each category displays varying degrees of directed or non-directed contact, control, and types of interaction.

Spicer notes that two indigenous groups may experience the same type of contact, but that this contact can have very different social, political, and cultural ramifications. Further, two indigenous groups can have completely different contact experiences yet find themselves in the same situation. Thus, while the different Native nations represented in Medicine Dream have had different experiences, they all come from a history of oppression at the hands of white people. This unites them, and all Natives, on the level of common experience which makes it possible for many people with diverse backgrounds to find expression in music that specifically presents the Mi'kmaq experience.

In addition to universal themes, there are other elements which add to the universal nature of Medicine Dream's music. While the Mi'kmaq language specifically points to the Mi'kmaq people, the use of vocables (such as we, he, ya, ho) as a common

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[22] Edward H. Spicer, "Types of Contact," p. 530-39.

mode of expression between all Native groups removes the music from its particular place, rendering it placeless. The use of vocables is significant; vocables provide a means of expressing complex emotions. In Paul's words, "We call [vocables] the language of our souls. Anyone can sing them. They're not actual words, per se, but they're feelings. They're sounds of feelings and . . . sometimes there are feelings that words just cannot express."[23] Multiple communications with Paul emphasized the fact that vocables can be sung by anyone. They do not require an intricate knowledge of a language, nor are they difficult to pronounce. Having heard them once, someone new to the music is able to sing along because of their universal nature.

I believe that the use of the English language is also a marker of universality. Like vocables, English is used as a common language. According to Hertzberg (1971), the growth of pan-Indianism in the Twentieth Century was aided by the development of reservations which concentrated Native populations in specific areas, by mass communication, and by the emergence of English as a common language.[24] Before this point, Native Americans' "sense of place was localized" and their lives were tribal-oriented.[25] With the development of pan-Indianism, Indian identity became less local and more universal: "This was the effort to find a common ground beyond the tribe, a broader identity and unity based on shared cultural elements, shared experiences, shared needs,

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[23] Paul Pike, Personal Interview, 2002.

[24] Hazel W. Hertzberg, *The Search for an American Indian Identity: Modern Pan-Indian Movements* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1971), p. 14.

[25] Hazel W. Hertzberg, *The Search for an American Indian Identity*, p. 1.

and a shared common fate."[26] The English language provided a common language through which this could develop.[27]

The drumming and singing heard on a Medicine Dream CD is in an inter-tribal powwow style. This style of music emerged with the rise of powwows as social and cultural events. These powwows were a direct outgrowth of pan-Indianism, which Wendell H. Oswalt defines as "a general sense of Indian cultural identity that unites the members of different tribes."[28] Music, in the form of drumming and singing, was a shared cultural element among Native people that could be drawn upon to unify different Native Nations. In adopting a general style to which all Native people could relate, the pan-Indian movement relied heavily on the traditions and music of the Plains Indians, using them as a basis for the inter-tribal style that developed. This style still dominates at powwows. Mark Mattern has noted that music at a powwow is one of the unifying characteristics that pushes aside tribal differences and aids the claim to a collective Native identity.[29] Further, Alice B. Kehoe describes the powwow as a space where "Indians of

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[26] Hazel W. Hertzberg, *The Search for an American Indian Identity*, p. 6.

[27] The English language was not a requirement for the emergence of this common identity. It was common for people to speak several languages so that they could communicate with others in the surrounding area. However, English was being taught in boarding schools or residential schools and Native languages were not. Thus, the English language became one used for communication between Native peoples.

[28] Wendell H. Oswalt, *This Land was Theirs: A Study of North American Indians* (Mountain View, California: Mayfield Publishing, 1988), p. 10.

[29] Mark Mattern, "The Powwow as a Public Aena for Negotiating Unity and Diversity in American Indian Life," in Duane Champagne, ed., *Contemporary Native American Cultural Issues* (Walnut Creek, California: AltaMira Press, 1999), p. 130.

every age and political leaning can gather."[30] In this way, powwows reinforce a collective social Native identity. Powwow-style music, as we will see, has greatly influenced the music of Medicine Dream.

Powwows evolved out of Plains culture and make use of the powwow drum, a large double-headed drum that sits in a frame with the heads parallel to the ground, so that the top head can be played, usually by 4-6 men striking it with padded beaters. In that it is a group drum, it is communal. This drum is featured in the music of Medicine Dream. At the start of each concert, each member prays to the four directions with the placement of tobacco on the drum.[31] Then this drum is played throughout the concert, sometimes by Buz and sometimes by the entire group gathered around it. This drum and the accented off-beats heard when it is played are markers of an unmistakable Indian identity.

Western listeners have been conditioned to hear the steady-beating of a drum, in what has been called the 'tom-tom' rhythm, as being Native. This feature is one of the most prominent gestures used when scoring music to portray the Native in a film: "Accompanying the onscreen Indian savage one usually hears a tom-tom rhythmic drumming figure of equal beats, the first of every four beats being accented."[32] This association may also be accomplished by placing this rhythm in a repeated bass note, or

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[30] Alice B. Kehoe, *North American Indians*, p. 347.

[31] The significance of this act is explored in **Chapter Three**.

[32] Claudia Gorbman, "Scoring the Indian: Music in the Liberal West," in Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh, eds., *Western Music and its Others: Difference, Representation, and Appropriation*

by slightly altering the rhythm to comprise a quarter-note followed by four eighths followed by another quarter, or some other combination of quarters and eighths. One need only recall Walt Disney's *Pocahontas* to confirm this use of the drumming style – it is an example of exoticism, and it reinforces in the listener the association of a particular drum pattern with a specific group of people. In this way, then, Native drumming can be an indicator of Nativeness to a non-Native listener.

The Native association with the drum, however, holds deeper significance. Each member of Medicine Dream has and plays a hand drum in concert. These single-headed drums are common to many Native nations and the beat of the drum has been described as the heartbeat of the people.[33] The identification with the drum is common to all Native peoples. While drumming on individual hand drums is an important aspect of those Native cultures which use them, Medicine Dream's identification with the powwow drum points to something else. The communal powwow drum emerged from the powwow tradition. One drum is played by many, reflecting the communal nature of pan-Indianism and providing a focal point for the community. In a similar manner, the members of Medicine Dream, with their distinct backgrounds, find a common identity and focus in the beating of the powwow drum.

The singing style employed by Paul's group is also that of inter-tribal powwow style, another musical marker of Indian identity that immediately identifies the singers as

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in Music (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), p. 235.

[33] Mark Mattern, "The Powwow as Public Arena," p. 131.

being Native. A claim for a unified identity among all Natives exists in this style as regional characteristics are not featured in the singing. For example, Alaskan Native music which exhibits a different vocal style even though it makes use of the frame drum, is significantly different from the vocals sung by Medicine Dream. The inter-tribal vocals employed by Medicine Dream are recognised and understood by all Natives and indicate Nativeness, but not a specific regional or tribal affiliation. This vocal style, then, emphasizes a universal identity over an particular one. To a non-Native audience, the use of intertribal singing style conveys "Indianness" to that audience, just as the powwow drumming does.

It is here that an in-depth study of two of Medicine Dream's songs from the recording *Tomegan Gospem* can illustrate the layering of both Native and non-Native elements to create contemporary Native music. First, I will examine "Time Immemorial," a song which makes use of the Mi'kmaq language, along with English, as well as a synthesis of Native and popular musical elements. Then I will turn to "People of the Dawn," which takes as its basis a round dance and is mixed with contemporary influences.

"Time Immemorial" was written by Paul Pike to describe the relationship between the Mi'kmaq and Beothuk Nations in *Ktagmkuk*, and their relationship to the land as First Nations people. As previously noted, the text of this song locates the music in a specific place, *Ktagmkuk*, by naming the place, as well as the *L'nuk* people. This song also names the Red Ochre People, or Beothuk Nation, who were also indigenous to Newfoundland

and who no longer exist as a people.[34] Unlike the Mi'kmaq who also live elsewhere in the Maritimes, the Beothuk lived only in Newfoundland. The following song text retains Paul Pike's own pronunciation guide of the Mi'kmaq words and a translation of that text by Paul, who was aided by Mike Doucette of the Eskasoni Mi'kmaq Nation:

Go inside yourself, what do you believe?
Do you want to know the truth about our Island?
We lived on this land since time immemorial,
We shared it with the Red Ochre People.

Chorus: [Spelled as pronounced]
Unckee-dayden...dun-delli-gen-eye-eck [Think of our strength]
Mini-goo-eek dook-ay-meck
Wes-co wee-dyke. [We are on the Island]
Unckee-dayden...dun-de-jick sooloo-look. [How much I love you]
Oooh...meema-jool-dee-eck [We are alive]
Mel-gee-genoo-aw-see. [We're made strong]

We are the *L'nuk*, our home is known as *Ktaqmkuk*,
But somebody came and called it Newfoundland.
The Beothuk Nation, they lived just north of us,
And even though they're gone, we still pray for them.

Bridge: Their Spirits are dancing, along side our people.
Even in death, we're so alive.

Chorus

Break

Chorus (with variation)

Chorus X2

[34] There are people in Newfoundland who have Beothuk ancestry, including some of the Mi'kmaq people, who intermarried with the Beothuk.

"Time Immemorial" features two measures of solo guitar in duple time as an introduction. The first verse is voiced only by Paul and accompanied by guitar, in the manner of a rock ballad. At the chorus, the group joins in singing the Mi'kmaq text with the addition of synthesizer. Of particular note here is the contour of the phrasing. The start of each of the two phrases of the chorus begins on a high note and continues in a descending fashion, in the manner of traditional Native singing. The second verse returns to the same melodic contour and thin texture of the first verse, incorporating drum kit and synthesizer. The group joins Paul again for a short bridge that emphasizes Western harmony, followed by the second iteration of the chorus. This is immediately followed by a guitar solo, with more active drum kit and keyboards. Next there is a significant stylistic shift in the music – group voices sing the chorus accompanied only by the powwow drum in a steady eighth-note rhythm. The texture then returns to that of the second time through the chorus and the chorus is repeated. The song ends with four measures of solo guitar in a manner similar to the introduction.

This song, then, demonstrates the fusion of both Native and non-Native elements. The non-Native elements of guitar and drum kit, along with popular vocal style and verse-chorus form is part of a universal pop/rock style. The inter-tribal vocals which feature a descending melodic contour point to a more universal approach to Native style; however, the addition of the Mi'kmaq language unmistakeably places the music among the Mi'kmaq people and the text, with words such as *L'nuk*, among the Mi'kmaq people of Newfoundland. Finally, the powwow drum of the powwow tradition provides the drumming style used. Throughout, there is a balance of the Native and non-Native

elements, as well as the universal aspects of the music with the particular. A study of "People of the Dawn" will further demonstrate this.

"People of the Dawn" is another song which makes reference to the Mi'kmaq of Newfoundland specifically, as these people are known as the People of the Dawn. It reinforces the connection of the people to their ancestors and the land, describing the cultural activities that celebrate the coming of summer and the thanks that is given for the gifts of shelter and food.

When the summertime has come
To the People of the Dawn
We'll be fishing on the coasts
Like our ancestors have done.
When we crawled out of the earth
Our spirit was born
We were purified and ready
We were thankful evermore.

Chorus:
When the summertime has come
To the People of the Dawn
We'll be dancing for our elders
We'll be dancing for the young
When the summertime has come
To the People of the Dawn.
We, we yo he yo, we yo he yo,
we yo we yo, we yo hi yo, we yo hi yo
we yo he he yo ho

For the gifts that we were given
The shelter and the food
Our families that surround us
Oh, and the strength to keep us true
All the times that we've been lonely
When we took the wrong path
The stars came out to guide us
In our journeys on the land.

First Half Chorus:
When the summertime has come
To the People of the Dawn

We'll be dancing for our elders
We'll be dancing for the young
When the summertime has come
To the People of the Dawn.

Bridge: Dawn. . . dawn. . .

Second Half Chorus:
We, we yo he ya, we yo he ya,
we yo we yo, we yo hi ya, we yo hi ya
we yo we yo he he.he

All the men will be singing
Singing songs from the heart
And are all women
Life givers. . .

[second half of chorus (slight variation) in background throughout]

First Half Chorus

To the People of the Dawn
When the summertime has come
To the People of the Dawn.

Once again, this song demonstrates the blending of two styles. It makes use of the English language and vocables as a common language that is understood by all, and once again features Western harmonies and pop/rock influences. However, the Native elements are foregrounded against a Western sonic background. "People of the Dawn" begins with a drum intro, a round dance played on a hand drum. The technique used is unique – the head is struck by a padded beater and a finger on the hand holding the frame drum flicks against the underside of the head to create a buzzing timbre when it makes contact with the already vibrating membrane. The first verse features Paul with guitar. The group joins in on the chorus, which features vocables in a descending melodic contour. Verse two, which reverts back to Paul's voice accompanied by guitar, also features synthesizer and drum. The first half of the chorus is sung by the entire group, followed by a bridge with

voices and guitar. Then the second half of the chorus, the vocables, are sung with slight variation. The third verse is half the length of the first and second verses, layered over the vocables, which are once again sung in slight variation. The chorus returns for a final time, sung by the entire group, followed by Paul singing "To the People of the Dawn/When the summertime has come to the People of the Dawn." The song ends with the drumming that opened the song. This round dance is prominent in the opening and closing sections, but it is not heard in the sections that are more heavily rock-oriented.

The text of "People of the Dawn," while specifically referring to the Mi'kmaq of Newfoundland, has a universal character in that it describes the events that accompany the arrival of summer. Certainly these events would apply to many different Native peoples, not just the Mi'kmaq. While it mentions the fishing on the coasts of Newfoundland and the ancestors of a specific people, it does not include the naming of places and the audience can relate to the general nature of the events. Again we hear the universal appeal of pop/rock elements, inter-tribal vocals, vocables, and the rhythms of the hand drum. Here we find that the lyrics are specific to a locale, but the underlying music is of a universal nature.

The music of Medicine Dream, then, is both placeless and placed at the same time. The Alaskan audience, listeners around the world, and the band members relate to Paul's music on a global or universal level in that they can relate to many of the themes featured within it. Further, there is a universal element to the music that does not indicate a specific place. Both pop/rock and inter-tribal powwow music are non-specific styles which speak to many and reflect little in the way of regional styles. However, Paul's

songs are specifically placed in Newfoundland with references to the island and the use of the Mi'kmaq language, providing an interesting discrepancy as the 'local' aspect of Medicine Dream's music resides thousands of kilometres away.

At this point we must return to the question of why Medicine Dream's music 'works' in Alaska but not in Newfoundland. What differences exist between Newfoundland and Alaska that allow for the successful commercial production of Native music in Alaska, but not in Newfoundland?

Perhaps the most significant difference between these two areas is the size of the Native population in relation to the total population in each place. The Native population in Newfoundland, while it exists, is small and does not have a strong presence in the province. The only area of dense population is Conne River, and that group is significantly small. In the 2001 Newfoundland Census, 28,065 people identified themselves as having Native heritage (Inuit, Métis, or North American Indian) of a total population of 531,595, accounting for 5.2% of the population.[35]

In contrast, the Native population in Alaska is quite large and their role in the state is visible, via the thirteen Native corporations.[36] According to a 2000 Census in the

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[35] Newfoundland and Labrador Statistics Agency, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, *Census 2001*, online. <www.nfstats.gov.nf.ca/Statistics/Census2001>

[36] Alaska, in contrast to the rest of North America, created Native corporations instead of reservations. Alaska Natives retained 44 million acres (10%) of their land and were given one billion dollars as compensation for their lost land. The money was divided among regional corporations, in which Native people were given membership or, more specifically, stock and each corporation invested the money as they deemed appropriate. The initial terms of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (1971) made provisions only for Native members alive in 1971 and did not make provisions for future generations of Natives. Members of corporations could not sell their shares until 20 years had passed. In 1988, the agreement was amended to permit gifting of old stock and issuing of new stock to Native people born after

United States, the Native population is 98,043 in Alaska, with a total population of 643, 786 (15.6%).[37] Numbers aside, the Native population is more visible in community events in Anchorage, for example. In an interview with Madonna Louvelle for *The Georgian*, Paul noted that unlike Newfoundland, Alaska has a visible Native population.[38] In Newfoundland, the culture that is seen is that of Irish heritage. Finding Native culture to experience is a difficult endeavour because of the small population of Native peoples, as well as the absence of a pluralist approach to culture by the Newfoundland government.

For a Native band to be successful, then, there is a need for a local Native community that can support the group and provide an audience for its music. In Sara Cohen's study of music and place (1998), her Jewish informant astutely noted that, "It is easier to be Jewish when you live with other Jews."[39] Certainly the same can be said of Native Peoples; the support system required to create and perform Native music must exist. Paul overtly makes this point:

> In Alaska right now, the population of Native people is very great here. There's a lot of support for Native music and Native views. In my home of Newfoundland, it's still very underground. It's a very colonial environment, with the media, as well as the government. So, it's very slow-moving to get recognised. A lot of

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the Settlement Act. (See McClanahan 2000, 14-19 and following.) This system provides Native people in Alaska with an acknowledged membership as a Native person (as defined by the nation-state). While people think of these corporations as Native entities, Paul Pike cautions that they do not necessarily speak for the communities they represent, nor does participation in a corporation equate to a Native lifestyle or culture.

[37] United States Census Bureau, *United States Census 2000*, online. <http://factfinder.census.gov>

[38] Madonna Louvelle, "A True Mi'kmaw Story," *The Georgian* (4 March 2002), p. 8A.

[39] Sarah Cohen, "Sounding Out the City: Music and the Sensuous Production of Place," in Andrew Leyshon, David Matless, and George Revill, eds., *The Place of Music* (New York: Guilford Press, 1998), p. 283.

> people have told me, if I'd tried to start Medicine Dream out of Newfoundland, it never would have got off the ground because the media wouldn't allow it really. We can't really talk about those things, because it makes colonial oppressors look at themselves. And people don't like to look at stuff they don't like. I guess the Creator put things here the way it was meant to be. It was meant to be an inter-tribal group. People say, "How come your group isn't all Mi'kmaq?" . . . We celebrate diversity, unity in diversity, as they say. In Alaska, we had the support to do it, the open-mindedness to look at this combination of traditional and contemporary, and pop even.[40]

The need for a support system for music to exist points to the social nature of music and its creators, as well as the social nature of identity formation and portrayal.

One might wonder, then, why it is that the music of Medicine Dream focusses on Paul Pike's homeland rather than addressing the specific, emplaced issues of the Native community in Alaska. Cohen points out that people will often have attachments to places in their past and that music is used to remember these places.[41] Paul's memories of his homeland are expressed through his music. He is keeping his own past and history alive through the music he creates and performs in Alaska. At the same time, this music is sent home to his people as a form of empowerment for them.

Stuart Hall (1991) has noted that identity is always related to "where is home and where is overseas, what is close to us and what is far away."[42] Such a conception of identity becomes difficult when considering the experiences of Paul. While home may be immediately assumed to mean Newfoundland for Paul, because that is where his

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[40] Paul Pike, Personal Interview, 2002.

[41] Sarah Cohen, "Sounding Out the City," p. 247.

[42] Stuart Hall, "The Local and the Global," p. 22.

immediate family is and where he grew up, Alaska could also be home for him. During the Medicine Dream concert, Paul introduced the song "Missing You" noting that he composed it while he was home in Newfoundland and was missing his family in Alaska. The distinction between what is close and far away, which is slowly being negated with the ease of international travel, does not stand in a globalizing world. Further, with travel being possible, and the increased mobility of people throughout the world, is it not possible to have two homes? "Missing You" is an example of a song that is tied to a place, home, but can refer to more than one home. Perhaps such an experience of having two homes and two families is related to the two-ness of identity which is further discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter Two
Authenticity and Double Consciousness

> A lot of people, when they talk about Native culture, they talk usually in the past, seventeen- or eighteen-hundreds. They just think of leather or buckskins and feathers. They don't think of Native culture in the present tense. And Native people can wear jeans and t-shirts and sneakers; they don't have to be wearing moccasins all the time, that's a stereotype. We're showing that the cultures are alive and that we are adaptable. That's how Native cultures have survived. And we can express ourselves through our environment. Rock music is an environment we all, most all of us, live in, and it's only natural that we would adapt it to express ourselves.
>
> – Paul Pike[1]

Changes in culture occur as groups adapt to new elements in their environment, whether in the realm of technology, clothing, or music, *et cetera*. The exposure to new tools or sounds may occur as an outside culture enters the space of another, or it may be the result of the migration of a cultural group to a different area. The new culture has an impact on the traditional culture and vice versa. In such a context, the adaptation or incorporation of foreign elements may be forced upon a people or willingly accepted by them. Musicians may not have much agency in determining the music that surrounds them in their environment, but they consciously decide to use these influences for creative and often political ends.

Sara Cohen (1998) notes that migration naturally leads to hybridity due to the interaction of one's past with one's new environment.[2] Certainly, people are moving around the globe more, and political distress has brought the emergence of more

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[1] Paul Pike, Personal Interview, 2002.

[2] Sarah Cohen, "Sounding Out the City," p. 284.

diasporas. Further, with the ease of international travel and communication via electronic mail and the Internet, it is not surprising that there is increasingly more interaction between different cultures. With this interaction, however, comes the blurring of boundaries between old and new, traditional and non-traditional.

Fusion has become an issue in relation to contemporary Native music in just this way. Paul Pike has been told by some that he does not play Native music because he incorporates a guitar in his music. Paul, however, sees this as a natural extension of the Native experience and a result of the experience of living in "two worlds" (the Native world and the surrounding white world). Certainly, this was the ideology held by those involved in the creation of the pan-Indian movement. Both the religious and the secular sides of this movement looked to the future of Native peoples through the blending of elements, rather than remaining in the past and strictly tied to traditional ways:

> Both reached beyond particular groups of tribes or areas. Both rejected the idea of a return to an aboriginal past or of a future in which the Indian would vanish altogether without a trace. Rather these movements sought, through a blending of aboriginal and white elements, to come to terms with modern American society.[3]

The powwow, an outgrowth of the pan-Indian movement, "represents a creative mixture of tradition, the sacred, social community, identity, and change."[4]

Change, then, has been a feature of Native life. Paul's approach to come to terms

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[3] Hazel W. Hertzberg, *The Search for an American Indian Identity*, p. 27.

[4] Mark Mattern, "The Powwow as Public Arena," p. 128.

with his own experience as a Native person attempting to maintain his heritage while accounting for his experience in today's world is through contemporary Native music which incorporates the guitar. Yet, he has been told that his music is not Native, not 'authentic' because of this guitar. How, then, do we define authenticity when using it to describe Native music? Does authentic mean traditional in this setting?

In an attempt to answer this question, I begin by looking at the various definitions of authenticity, starting with that of Western Art music. In the context of Western classical music, authenticity has traditionally been linked with performance practice and the desire to perform music 'accurately,' in the manner in which it would have been originally heard. It may also revolve around modern efforts to recreate the original performance of a work or the way in which a composer intended the music to sound.[5] Such efforts necessarily are based on the notation of the music, as well as treatises that offer insight as to how the notation was performed. Native music, however, is an oral tradition and such writings do not exist. If one takes 'the way in which it would have been originally heard' to mean the manner in which it would be heard in a traditional context, then perhaps this definition could have some bearing on the present investigation. Here authenticity is measured against how the sound relates to the what an audience expects. Such a definition would indicate that Native music performed in a traditional way would

[5]For a complete explanation of authenticity in Western classical music, and the scholarly arguments through the years, see Richard Taruskin, *Text and Act: Essays on Music and Performance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

be authentic. However, authenticity in Native music is far more complex than that.

Authenticity in the folk tradition often implies that the performer understands hard times and has some direct experience of that which he sings. For example, an unknown independent musician singing about the difficulties of providing for his family would be considered 'authentic' while a singer from an affluent family singing the same song would not resonate with the public in the same way. The perceived socio-economic standing of the performer in relation to the themes which he sings can affirm his authenticity or negate it. Moore (2002) points out that the word 'authentic' is often set in opposition to commercial, noting that there is a perceived connection between authentic music and non-commercial music.[6] Here there is some value of truth in relation to the song content or its message. Authenticity in this manner, then, is measured socially based on the socio-economic standing of the performer in relation to his audience.

In examining the notion of 'authentic' in rock of the 1980s, Gilbert and Pearson (1999) noted the link between authenticity and 'truth':

> Artists must speak the truth of their (and others') situations. Authenticity was guaranteed by the presence of a specific type of instrumentation . . . The singer was the focus, and it is crucial that he . . . should be authentic and sincere, because his fundamental role was to *represent* the culture from which he comes. In speaking the truth of his situation he must speak the truth of his audience's situation.[7]

Such an approach can be thought of as a cultural measurement of authenticity, a

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[6] Allan Moore, "Authenticity and Authentication," *Popular Music* 21 (2002), p. 211. It should be noted that non-commercial does not mean that music is not recorded, but that it is not produced to sell at the level of major recording artists who are created and marketed to a specific demographic.

[7] Jeremy Gilbert and Ewan Pearson, *Discographies: Dance Music, Culture, and the Politics of*

combination of both sonic and social authenticity. Moore (2002) has expanded upon this idea of authenticity, positing three approaches to authenticity, "that artists speak the truth of their own situation; that they speak the truth of the situation of (absent) others; and that they speak the truth of their own culture, thereby representing (present) others," and referring to these as first, third, and second person authenticity respectively.[8]

First person authenticity as Moore conceives it occurs when a composer or performer is successful in conveying to the audience "that his/her utterance is one of integrity, that is represents an attempt to communicate in an unmediated form with an audience."[9] Third person authenticity differs from this in that it presents the "ideas of another, embedded within a tradition of performance."[10] Second person authenticity validates the "listener's experience of life."[11] In each category, the important notion is that of success – the performer must leave the audience with an impression that he was successful in his pursuit. This is a particularly effective approach to defining authenticity because it takes into account the fact that what is authentic to one may not be authentic to another. Authenticity, then, is dependent on the reception of the audience; it is a communicative act.

These ways of thinking about authenticity have been conceived of in relation to

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Sound (London: Routledge, 1999), pp. 164-65.

[8] Allan Moore, "Authenticity as Authentication," p. 209.

[9] Allan Moore, "Authenticity as Authentication," p. 214.

[10] Allan Moore, "Authenticity as Authentication," p. 218.

[11] Allan Moore, "Authenticity as Authentication," p. 220.

classical music, folk music, and early rock music. What it means to be authentic in contemporary Native music has not yet been fully addressed. Christopher A. Scales (2002), who has examined the differences in the production of powwow music and contemporary Native music, has made some preliminary observations on the interrelated issues of authenticity, liveness, and mediation. Scales uses the term authenticity to refer to how authentically Native something is. In Scales' research the question is posed as to how Native a contemporary Native music recording is if the producer arranges it and some of the featured musicians are not Native. What must be present to make something Native? Is it a Native composer? Native sounds? Native themes? He determines that the definition changes based on one's perspective.[12]

Liveness is intricately linked with authenticity. Powwow music is appreciated for its aesthetic of liveness, the spontaneous and live performance of the music. This music was not traditionally meant for concert stages, which though live are not socially situated in Native practice, or for audio recordings; rather, it was live social music for dancing and praying. In recording it, vocals and drumming are normally recorded on the same track to maintain the live sound. They are often recorded live at powwows; however, if they are recorded in a studio, every effort is made to maintain this live aesthetic.[13] The authentic nature of the music is measured socially by the audience's response to it.

Related again to authenticity and liveness is the issue of mediation. In the

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[12] Christopher A. Scales, "The Politics and Aesthesics of Recording: A Comparative Canadian Case Study of Powwow and Contemporary Native American Music," *The World of Music* 44 (2002), p. 46.

[13] Christopher A. Scales, "The Politics and Aesthetics of Recording," p. 52.

powwow genre, music is expected to be live. In a live situation, mediation or manipulation of sound through production is not present. Maintaining the liveness of powwow music, and thereby its authentic sound, therefore requires little or no mediation. However, in contemporary Native music, mediation is acceptable and occurs with the use of special effects, multi-track recording[14], *et cetera*.[15]

Here, then, the definition of authenticity is once again largely linked with the unmediated form. Further, it is connected with cultural knowledge, practice, and tradition. However, Paul claims that his contemporary music is just as authentic as traditional music because he conceives of tradition as something dynamic that changes over time. Again we are faced with the question of what makes Native music authentic? Can the combination of both Native life and the influences of the Euro-American world result in 'authentic' music?

Adding to the complexity of the authenticity question is the idea of a recording studio producing music. Can such produced music be authentic? Once again we must look to Moore for the reception of the recording. Ultimately it is the audience that determines whether a recording is considered authentic. If the audience finds that it expresses the truth of their situation, then it is authentic along the lines of Moore's second person authenticity. In the same way, if the audience deems the recording successful in

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[14] Multi-track recording involves recording each instrument or voice on a separate track and putting them together during the mixing process. A single-track recording would have both instruments and voice recorded on the one track, thereby using the lowest possible recording forces and the least amount of mediation.

[15] Christopher A. Scales, "The Politics and Aesthetics of Recording," pp. 52-3.

conveying a message with integrity and intimacy, then first person authenticity has been achieved. For recordings existing in the realm of the singer-songwriter, it is certainly possible to have authentic mediated music. However, with the addition of more mediation, such as over-dubbing and electronica, it is likely that such music would not be considered authentic by its audience. It is important to remember that the perception of a music as being authentic is highly subjective and dependent on the individual.

With much debate as to the nature of authenticity, I find no one approach to be sufficient. With Scales' investigation into authenticity, as with authenticity of the folk tradition, there is certainly a tendency towards the association of authenticity with music that displays little or no mediation (such as live powwow music or the singer-songwriter tradition). Such music conveys an immediacy that allows for intimate communication with the audience – the listener perceives the communication between the performer and himself to be direct and the performer to be an approachable, everyday person, as opposed to a top-selling pop artist who appears to be unapproachable and highly produced. Further, I agree that to be authentic, a performer must display a connection to the issues of which he sings. For example, Paul's experience of growing up in Newfoundland and being a Mi'kmaq lends some validity to his performance of songs meant to educate his audience about the Mi'kmaq situation in Newfoundland. In the end, however, I find Moore's approach to authenticity to be the most useful in that it takes into account difference in contexts and audience response.

Paul's music is in the style of singer-songwriter; Paul is both the performer and the composer of this music and his performance is intimate and unmediated. He is not

representing the ideas or thoughts of another, but it singing about issues that have affected him and been part of his past and his culture. He sings of his own lived experience and of the journey of discovery upon which he has embarked, thus his audience finds his performance to have integrity. This can be conceived of as Moore's 'first person authenticity' as the performer is being authenticated.

I attended a Medicine Dream concert while in Alaska. An audience of approximately 100 Natives and non-Natives of all ages were in attendance and responded to the music they heard with applause and cheering. Many sang along with each song. Several of the audience members had previously attended Medicine Dream concerts; they are present whenever concerts are held because Paul's message resonates so strongly with them. In such a way, Medicine Dream's music validates the life experience of his audience (Moore's 'second person authenticity'). The audience is being authenticated here as they relate to the songs and stories of oppression and misinformation perpetrated against Native peoples. As pointed out in **Chapter One**, the specific experience of one indigenous group can be quite distinct and apply only to that group. However, regardless of the distinct cultural, political, and social particularity of a group, a common experience of oppression unites marginalised groups. In presenting the oppression experienced by the Mi'kmaq people, the Natives listening to Medicine Dream's music also find in it an expression of their own oppression and the oppression felt by other Native people.

Certainly, it must be duly noted that there are people who do not feel that their life experience is being validated by the music of Medicine Dream. In his interview, Paul related his experience from when he first started Medicine Dream: "I remember when I

first started. People said, 'Oh, you guys aren't playing Native music 'cause you got a guitar there.'"[16] One can only assume that these people correlated Native music with traditional Native music that does not incorporate non-Native instruments. In this case, the performance of contemporary Native music does not validate this person's life experience and, therefore, the performance is seen as inauthentic. This again points out the subjective nature of authenticity – it is dependent upon how successful the audience perceives the performer to be. Paul's performance can be both authentic for the hundred people at the Medicine Dream concert I attended and inauthentic for the person who believes that truly authentic Native music requires only traditional instruments and form without the addition of Western instruments.

The third type of authenticity noted by Moore is that of "third person authenticity", a type of authenticity which "arises when a performer succeeds in conveying the impression of accurately representing the ideas of another, embedded within a tradition of performance."[17] This type of authenticity validates some other who may be completely absent from the audience or the performers. The non-Native elements of Medicine Dream's music could be conceived of in this manner. The pop and rock aspects of their music, both on recordings and in live performance, exist within a tradition of pop and rock performances of the dominant musical culture of North

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[16] Paul Pike, Personal Interview, 2002.

[17] Allan Moore, "Authenticity as Authentication," p. 218.

America. This clearly audible style of music, combined with Native elements results in music which may be considered to be the authentic voice of twentieth-century Native America.

This scholarly approach to explaining authenticity and accounting for it is a necessary exercise. Moore's framework certainly provides a open-ended approach to this type of study. However, it is also important to note what the artists themselves have said about what makes Native music authentic for them and that their concept of authenticity is finding expression in all the arts, not just music.

Here, I return to the opening quote of this chapter which expresses Paul Pike's thoughts regarding authenticity. Paul maintains that it is natural to combine Native music with pop and rock influences because pop and rock were the musics that he grew up listening to. The influence of the Euro-American world on Native life cannot be ignored; media bombards the world with the musical expression of the majority rather than the minority. When the minority is represented, it is often essentialized and deemed 'exotic,' providing the world with something novel. The influence of media exposure on a composer cannot be denied, but it can be incorporated to express the true experience of the musician:

> You could use blues if that's what you're coming from. It's what you identify with. For myself personally, I grew up listening to and performing a lot of rock music, so it's naturally a part of me. When I implemented my cultural background, this was natural to mend the two. It's part of me, it's a part of my life.[18]

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[18] Paul Pike, Personal Interview, 2002.

Such hybridity, as noted by Paul, is a result of living in and experiencing two worlds; it arises from the double consciousness felt by Native people. In her recent study of the role and experiences of women in producing contemporary Native music, Beverley Diamond (2002) noted the double consciousness, or two-ness of identity, that is at the heart of such musical hybridity. She describes this as the "in-betweenness of living among different cultural worlds."[19]

The term "double consciousness" was coined by W. E. B. DuBois (1986 [1903]) in relation to Blacks in America who attempted to reconcile their experiences as Black people restrained by white culture. DuBois explains this experiential position of two-ness:

> After the Egyptian and Indian, the Greek and Roman, the Teuton and Mongolian, the Negro is a sort of seventh son, born with a veil, and gifted with second-sight in this American world – a world which yields him no true self-consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world. It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness, – an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder. . . .
>
> The history of the American Negro is the history of this strife, – this longing to attain self-conscious manhood, to merge his double self into a better and truer self . . . He simply wishes to make it possible for a man to be both a Negro and an American, without being cursed and spit upon by his fellows, without having the doors of opportunity closed roughly in his face.[20]

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[19] Beverley Diamond, "Native Contemporary Music: The Women," *The World of Music* 44 (2002), p. 33.

[20] W. E. B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, in *Writings* (New York: The Library of America, 1986 [1903]), pp. 364-65.

A re-reading of DuBois' passage substituting the term Native American for Negro displays how similar this experience of double consciousness is for Native people. The similarity of experience between Native Americans and African Americans results from a common experience of oppression. Oppression by the white (Western) world is crucial to this idea of two-ness, because it is oppression that keeps the other world fundamentally out of reach. While the types of oppression faced by each group were significantly different, the socio-economic, political, and cultural repercussions of the oppression are quite similar for both groups holding a position of marginality against the dominant culture.[21] Jonathan D. Hill (1996) has noted that the similarity of their experience includes such commonalities as "powerlessness, racial stereotypification, enslavement, and marginalization."[22] With similar experiences, it stands to reason that using the same frameworks to investigate their experiences could produce useful information and ways of approaching topics of identity.

It is not novel to take frameworks originally meant to describe or explain the experience of Black Americans and use them to help understand that of Native Americans. In 1999, Devon Mihesuah used William Cross' model outlining stages of identity resolution in Blacks to better understand the same in Native Americans.23 Recognizing the inherent differences in the two groups, the application of this model

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[21] Refer to the discussion of Spicer's types of contact, in **Chapter One**.

[22] Jonathan D. Hill, "Introduction: Ethnogenesis in the Americas, 1492-1992," in Jonathan D. Hill, ed., *History, Power, and Identity: Ethnogenesis in the Americas* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1996), p. 5.

provided a particularly useful manner for studying Native identity as it develops and the choices involved. In this vein, I use DuBois' concept of double consciousness as a lens to investigate and understand the current trend towards two-ness in Native literature and conversations in Native societies. For me, it is useful to think about the experience of being Native in a White-dominated world in terms of double consciousness. I use it as Beverley Diamond has, to describe the in-betweenness that results from living in two different worlds. DuBois' concept highlights the power dimension inherent in such an existence; the situation is forced upon the subaltern group. Such hegemony results in the subaltern group thinking of themselves in terms of a framework created by the dominant group, and they see themselves through the lens of the dominant culture rather than through their own. Michael Frishkopf has eloquently summarized this concept: "We have been denied a fundamental right, the right to self-consciousness."[24] As such, double consciousness is a negative experience that minorities struggle against.

As part of this struggle, Native people have worked, and continue to work, to silence external voices and assert their own in literature and academic studies that imposed hegemonic frameworks. Similarly, Native musicians are finding a musical voice that they can assert with authority as Native people. In creating music that combines musical elements experienced by living in two worlds, Paul Pike is displaying a broader consciousness.

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[23] Devon Mihesuah, "American Indian Identities," pp. 13-38.

[24] Michael Frishkopf. Personal Communication. April 24, 2003.

The music composed by Paul Pike displays a hybridity of Native and non-Native, of old tradition and new influences naturally emerging from a double consciousness formed in society. This is the type of hybrid musical form described by Davin Seay, a writer for *Billboard*. He notes that the result of such a combination is "music that, while it could be called jazz, new age or anything else, still retains its cultural identity" and its cultural integrity.[25] Synthesis, then, is necessary to the hybrid form.

In 2001, Seay recognized a new challenge facing Native music artists, that is "the age old debate between traditionalists, intent on preserving a precious cultural heritage, and those modernists intent on utilizing contemporary musical forms to reshape their cultural context."[26] His work with Robert Doyle and Joseph Fire Crow shows that this trend towards hybridity is gaining ground among Native people. Robert Doyle notes that, "The cultural foundations must be preserved, while at the same time allowing for new ways to express that culture,"[27] while Joseph Fire Crow notes that staying true to Native roots does not preclude using modern instruments or new sounds to express a Native perspective: "I don't believe [staying true to Native roots] means we can never pick up an electric guitar or use a synthesizer, but we have to respect the fundamentals of our heritage. Otherwise, there is nothing that distinguishes our music from any other style."[28]

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[25] Davin Seay, "The Big Picture," pp. 22-24.

[26] Davin Seay, "Native American Music: Growing Recognition Brings New Challenges and Controversy – from Roots to Rap, the Genre and its Audience Expands," in *Billboard* 113.34 (2001), p. 19.

[27] Davin Seay, "Native American Music," p. 20.

[28] Davin Seay, "Native American Music," p. 26.

The balance between Native and non-Native, old and new tradition, then, is a delicate one. While life experience lends itself to hybrid forms, they are just that – hybrid. Both parts must be present to be creative and distinctive at once. It would appear, then, that Champagne (1999) is correct in that the question is not whether change can or should happen, but *how much* change should occur.[29]

It is particularly useful to consider who makes the decision as to how much change should occur. Native musicians are determining how to balance the musical elements of tradition with modern influences and it is this that is significant – Native people are deciding how much influence the dominant culture has on their music. In the music of Medicine Dream, it is Paul who determines the relationship between these elements. He foregrounds Native elements against a dominant "white" rock idiom, giving the Native aspect of his music prominence. Ultimately an issue of control, here it is the Native musician who determines the balance between contemporary and traditional elements. This is not to say that a Native composer has complete agency over his output. It must be acknowledged that his music is inevitably influenced by outside factors, such as his audience, the expectations of his record company, the talents of his fellow musicians, and so on. Within these frameworks, the composer makes decisions as to how his music will sound and be performed, how the Native and non-Native elements of his music should be balanced.

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[29] Duane Champagne, "Introduction: Change, Destruction, and Renewal of Native American Cultures at the End of the Twentieth Century," in Duane Champagne, ed., *Contemporary Native American Cultural Issues* (Walnut Creek, California: Altamira Press, 1999), p. 9.

How much change must be exhibited before something is no longer considered traditional? The answer to such a question varies tremendously and is dependant upon a person's definition of both tradition and authenticity. Perhaps the answer, however, is not in whether something sounds traditional, but whether the spirit behind its creation is linked to tradition. Poet (2001) found that this was indeed the belief of Tom Bee, an important figure in the Native music industry: "The main concern is staying true to the spirit of the music we had before the Europeans came."[30] Borrowing from other musical traditions, then, and making use of non-traditional instruments can be part of a music that maintains its cultural integrity.

Champagne (1999) has noted that such selective borrowing from the dominant culture has occurred since contact:

> In a complex combination of colonial domination and cultural sharing, Native people have struggled with colonial impositions such as boarding schools and the discouragement of tribal language, culture, and religion, while at the same time they have selectively and strategically borrowed ideas, technologies, and religious, political, and legal concepts. Introducing these concepts to their own communities has become a means of preserving tribal sovereignty, identity and community.[31]

This supports the notion of a changing and adapting culture being authentic. Paul emphasized this point many times during our exchanges in Alaska and repeatedly told me that culture can and does evolve. This natural change is expressed by combining tradition with new ideas. This directly relates to one's identity. Identity, as an all-encompassing

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[30] J. Poet, "Spotlight on Native Music," in *Native Peoples* 14 (2001), p. 33.

[31] Duane Champagne, "Introduction," p. 8.

concept of who a person is and how he represents himself, is a combination of roots and experience; both are involved in shaping the identity of a person and the way in which he conceptualizes his identity.

Bauman (2001) has noted that the modern notion of identity necessarily includes both traditional and modern aspects. With globalization, living a traditional life of the past is an impossibility. Since change is inevitable, one must renegotiate one's identity to include both tradition and modernity.[32] So, while musical hybridity is a choice made by musicians wanting to incorporate the two distinct parts of their identity, it is also a necessity that has evolved out of globalization. It would be impossible to live a life completely untouched or unaffected by the dominant culture. Musicians, then, cannot escape the musical influence of the Western world and, therefore, their musical identities reflect this two-ness.

It must be duly noted, however, that while their musical identities are shaped by the two-ness of their experiences, Native musicians do not always turn to a hybrid musical form to express this fact. Some musicians use music as a space in which they can fortify the 'traditional' aspect of their experiences. While they acknowledge the modern influences surrounding them, they choose to perform in a traditional manner to strengthen that aspect of their identity. This does not necessarily mean that they reject modernity, but that they seek to maintain their traditions. Other Native musicians perform in a style that displays no Native elements or markers. Again, this is a choice to perform in a style

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[32] Zygmunt Bauman, "Identity in the Globalizing World," p. 481.

not directly indexing Native tradition that does not necessarily indicate the rejection of this tradition. Music, then, can be used to acknowledge or express different aspects of Native identity. The current study focusses on those Native musicians who choose to use music as a site for the negotiation of the relationship between tradition and modernity, which may also be conceived of as Native and dominant Western culture.

Certainly, the use of popular forms by musicians as a medium can be purposeful. In looking at the popular music of Jerry Alfred, Beverley Diamond (1999) found that Alfred used this medium because children and young adults will listen to and understand this music since they live in a world inundated with such sounds.[33] Here I recall my conversation with John Field, who asked me whether I thought that people were receiving the message transmitted in Medicine Dream's music. We both agreed that initially, most people listen on a superficial level, but if you catch their attention and they enjoy the music, the message it is sending will eventually find them. However, should the message come in a musical expression which they do not understand or care to listen to, it can never reach them. Certainly, popular music as a language that will reach a broad audience is an important factor to consider when determining how an audience understands the message. Since Natives grow up hearing popular music, as a result of the two-ness of experience and exposure to the white world, this medium can be particularly effective when making a political or educational statement.

Two publications from 1994 address the two-ness of identity and its expression in

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[33] Beverley Diamond, "Theory from Practice: First Nations Popular Music in Canada," *Repercussions* 7/8 (1999), p. 406.

the arts, *Creation's Journey: Native American Identity and Belief*, edited by Tom Hill and Richard W. Hill, and *This Path We Travel: Celebrations of Contemporary Native American Creativity*, a collection of Native artists' autobiographies assembled by the National Museum of American Art Staff. Both publications focus on specific artists and permit them to voice their experiences as artists and why they approach their art the way they do. In *This Path We Travel*, Frank LaPena echoes the sentiments of Paul regarding the arts in general, saying "As we move into the twenty-first century, we know it is impossible to return to the old days. But what was good from the past should be preserved. . . . As the creators of today, we use whatever is necessary to show us the truth for our times."[34] This statement reflects the concept of authenticity as truth within a particular context, truth being an aspect of authenticity noted by Moore (2002) and Gilbert and Pearson (1999) above.

The two-ness of identity expressed in the music of Medicine Dream, and other contemporary Native music, finds a parallel in the visual arts. This approach to modern Native art is the focus of *Creation's Journey*. Paul's conception of tradition as an ever-changing, dynamic force finds further expression in the word's of artist Jacki Rand:

> The Native artist . . . [values] the creation of [art] . . . over the final product. Process speaks to historical or cultural significance because it is testimony to cultural continuity and change. It is the evidence of lost traditions, innovations, preserved cultural knowledge, historic perspective, and vision of the future.[35]

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[34] Frank LaPena, "Emergence: the Fourth World," in *This Path We Travel: Celebrations of Contemporary Native American Creativity* (Colorado: Fulcrum, 1994), p. 3.

[35] Tom Hill and Richard W. Hill, *Creation's Journey: Native American Identity and Belief.* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press in association with the National Museum of the American

This, again, reinforces the concept of change as being an essential part of the Native lifestyle, the incorporation of non-Native elements as a natural part of cultural growth. However, Tom Hill (1994) points out that this ideology has not always been accepted, and it continues to meet resistance:

> Behind glass in museum cases, Native Americans were frozen in the past. European-Americans stopped wearing knickers and three-cornered hats without losing their identity. Yet native people who evolved, adapted, and made creative accommodations to the passage of time were disparaged as not being "real Indians." Ironically, this happened at the same time governments, churches, and other social institutions were making every effort to force us to cease "being Indian."[36]

One must question, then, whether 'traditional' Native American identity is a construct of colonizers that was later taken up by Natives themselves. The adaptive and changing nature of Native life has not been portrayed by the dominant culture; instead, Natives were considered to be living a 'primitive' lifestyle. It is this primitive lifestyle that came to be associated with traditional Native life, along with clothing such as buckskins, past types of housing (teepee), *et cetera*. Certainly, shows such as Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show constructed an image of the Native American that still persists today – the Plain's Indian in colourful feathers is still what some think of when they think Native American. This essentialist approach to defining tradition did not take into account the differences that exist between different Native peoples or the necessarily

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Indian, Smithsonian Institution, 1994), p. 10.

[36] Tom Hill, "Introduction: A Backwards Glimpse Through the Museum Door," in Tom Hill and Richard W. Hill, eds., *Creation's Journey: Native American Identity and Belief* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press in association with the National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution, 1994), p. 16.

adaptive nature of Native life. Rather, it is more like a snapshot of one group (that perhaps never existed) at one particular time that has come to represent 'tradition' in Native culture for non-Natives.

The similarities between Hill's statement and that of Paul's which opened this chapter are significant. Tradition need not be static in order for a cultural identity to exist. Since people constantly renegotiate their identities to express who they are, and often these people have more than one cultural background in the ever-globalizing world, it makes logical sense that Native peoples would renegotiate their identities to express the 'in-betweenness' they experience as members of two distinct worlds.

Such a concept of tradition is not novel. The book *Indian Artists At Work* (1977) presented this very approach to tradition. Most succinctly put by Robert Davidson, a Haida artist, "The only way tradition can be carried on is to keep inventing new things."[37] Richard Hill notes that in the creative process, Native artists use "symbols and metaphors from the past" to find new ways of expressing their identities.[38] This is the very approach to Native art I experienced in Anchorage, Alaska.

On my first visit to the Alaska Native Heritage Center, I marvelled at the metal sculpture outside the building, a thirteen foot tall sculpture of the figure I would later

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[37] Quoted in Richard W. Hill, "Epilogue: Art Through Indian Eyes," in Tom Hill and Richard W. Hill, eds., *Creation's Journey Native American Identity and Belief.* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press in association with the National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution, 1994), p. 238.

[38] Richard W. Hill, "Epilogue," p. 238.

recognise as Raven the Creator.[39] Created by John Hoover (1919-1994), it portrays a significant figure from several Native creation stories. The medium in which it was sculpted, however, is unlike any material of Native tradition – it is bronze. Hoover, an Aleut artist commissioned by the Alaska Native Heritage Centre, carved Raven in dense foam, divided this carving into pieces, cast each piece separately, and then welded them together.[40] The use of a new material does not make it any less Native; it is simply a new means of displaying a prominent figure in Alaska Native culture. It is the symbol of Raven that displays the roots of the artist, while it is the medium that indicates the artist's exposure to the white world. This may be conceived of as an authentic work of art, as it successfully tells the truth of the artist who created it. Further, it authenticates the life experience of the audience who views it and recognizes in it the two-ness of their own experience.

While in Alaska I had the good fortune to make the acquaintance of Don LaVonne, a silversmith who creates Native jewellery. Our meeting was entirely unplanned, but proved to be very significant for my understanding of contemporary Native arts. Two days after arriving in Alaska, the band on my gold claddagh ring cracked, rendering it unwearable. A few weeks later, I contacted John for his interview. He picked me up and we drove to the Alaska Native Heritage Center in Anchorage. While driving, I questioned him on several aspects of life in Anchorage and the best

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[39] See Appendix A.

[40] Julie Decker, *John Hoover: Art & Life* (Seattle: Anchorage Museum of History and Art and the Anchorage Museum Association in Association with the University of Washington Press, 2002), pp. 57-8.

tourist spots. I also mentioned my ring and asked if he could recommend a jeweller to repair it. John suggested Don and e-mailed Don's scanned business card to me shortly after our interview. I e-mailed Don, set up a time to pop by and get my ring repaired, and went to his shop for what I thought would be a standard ring repair. What should have been a five-minute meeting quickly turned into an hour discussion during which I received a tour of Don's workplace. I was immediately impressed by the detail of his work and had a particular fondness for his silver eagle feather earrings which I later purchased for myself.[41] I am happy to say that my ring is like new and in the process I learned a great deal from Don.

Don started his new business, LFJ Manufacturing, only recently, but it is obvious that an artist has been inside him for years and has now finally surfaced. Don creates Native symbols and designs out of gold and silver metals. He told me that he can foresee a time in the near future when the art of carved ivory will have to pass as resources become endangered and restrictions on ivory increase. Don felt it made sense to transfer Native carving to a new medium for this reason, and, since gold appears to be a metal that will always be in demand, he transferred the art of carving ivory to that of carving wax moulds into which metals are poured to make jewellery.

While not all of the jewellery Don creates features Native symbols, much of the jewellery I saw had Native elements. Don, with Paul's input, has created a line of jewellery for Medicine Dream. It often features the eight-point star that is prominent in

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[41] See Appendix A.

Mi'kmaq culture and incorporates eagle feathers, recognized by most, if not all, Native groups. This jewellery, which takes the form of earrings, money clips, and ponytail holders, is sold at Medicine Dream concerts. Don also showed me his (then) latest work – silver frame drums with Yup'ik words on them. These pieces of jewellery provide a new manner in which Native people can display their Native heritage and identity. They are a visible symbol of one's connection to a community.

The shift from ivory carving (which is still widely practised) to that of silver work maintains the art of Native carving; the medium is changed but the artistry and traditional meaning behind the work remain. Don's artistry is authenticated in this manner, because he is successfully telling the truth of his experience of the need for change to occur in Native arts. Further, those people who purchase his jewellery and wear it are authenticated in that his jewellery displays some truth of their experience of an always changing Native life. Again, this adds weight to the notion of culture and tradition as a dynamic process, rather than a static object. Both Don and Paul are continuing their cultures by allowing change to take place while maintaining roots in a strong tradition. The message is not changed, nor is tradition changed, by incorporating new media in which to place the message and tradition, such as a new metal (Don's silver) or a new instrument (Paul's guitar).

In the realm of the arts, then, culture and tradition must be seen in a process-oriented manner. The concepts of authenticity, tradition, and double-consciousness are intricately linked in the modern world and cannot be discussed separately. Tradition does not preclude the use of modern techniques or media, nor does the use of those render a

performance or work of art inauthentic. I argue that authenticity is based solely on whether the artist is successful in representing the truth of a life experience, whether his own or that of others. The fact remains that the life experience of a Native person today is often that of having a foot in both worlds, those of Native life and Western modernity. For a singer-songwriter who has lived this two-ness to disassociate himself from one side could possibly be seen as the inauthentic performance, while he who incorporates both parts of his life experience, both truths, is seen as authentic. In the end, there are no objective parameters against which to gauge Nativeness, but only the subjective response of the audience as they determine how successful the performer is in portraying what is perceived as the truth.

Chapter Three
Medicine Dream and the Performance of Identity

Reading about Medicine Dream's first CD, *Identity* (1998), on the Medicine Dream website not long after I had purchased it, I read that all the proceeds from the sales of this first album were being donated to the K. C. LaFevre Memorial Fund to prevent drug and alcohol abuse. While I knew of the deep connection between Paul and K. C., and assumed that this was the motivation behind Paul's actions, I learned that a tradition from Native culture was also a force encouraging this action. In some Native cultures, Paul notes on his website, it is tradition to give away the first of anything that you make. Since *Identity* was Paul's first CD, he gave the profits from it away to help others.

The first summer that I attended the Elmastukwek Mi'kmaq Mawio'Mi, I remember visiting the Pike family before Paul returned to Alaska. With me I brought my first attempt at making a dream-catcher. It was special to me because I had made it with my own hands and because it was the first one I made, and I wanted to give it to Paul to thank him for his help with my undergraduate paper on his song "Jalasi." When I gave it to him, he asked me how long I'd been making dream-catchers. I replied that it was my first one and he quickly reminded me that this was what his people did, that it was Native tradition to give away the first of anything you make, whether it be a woven basket, a CD, or a dream-catcher. Without realizing it, Paul's words penetrated my subconscious and I have since realized that I too give away the first of everything I make.

From the beginning I have worked with the idea that identity is all-encompassing; it is the way in which one sees oneself, one's beliefs and thoughts, family, history, roots.

One's ideology is a significant aspect of identity. This identity can be displayed or portrayed to others in a variety of ways, including dress, the use of signs or symbols of one's heritage, or language. In the context of a group, these cues as to identity may point to an individual identity or may reinforce collective identity or one's membership in a group. While identity among Native people is not conceived of in this fashion, as individual or collective, nor is it necessarily a conscious thought process, such a model is a useful tool for understanding levels of identity and is employed throughout to accomplish this goal. The present chapter focusses on the way in which the individual members of Medicine Dream portray their identities, as well as the way in which they each find expression in a collective identity, focussing on the themes discussed through Paul's music, the band's choice of clothing, the use of the Mi'kmaq language and vocables, the ways in which Native traditions figure into performances and the creation of CDs, and the symbols used to convey identity.

In the creation of CDs, Paul has the opportunity to present his personal identity. The cover artwork of *Mawio'Mi* (2000) features the Mi'kmaq eight-point star on a piece of quillwork made by Paul. Paul told me that seven of the points of the star signify the seven tribes of the Mi'kmaq people. The eighth point represents the Queen and European contact. It is a symbol of peace and of the Mi'kmaq people. He regularly wears this on his regalia.[1] As an image on a CD cover it also represents Paul, who created it and wears it. It displays his participation and membership in a Native community. In a similar manner,

[1] See Appendix B.

the artwork for *Tomegan Gospem* (2002) is also representative of who Paul is as a Mi'kmaq of Newfoundland; it is a traditional birch bark carving that Paul himself carved.

These symbols are also used on posters advertising upcoming performances of Medicine Dream and are featured on the Medicine Dream website.[2] Herbert Gans (1996) has noted that the use of easily identifiable symbols is important in a media-saturated world.[3] While his study of these symbols was in relation to what he termed "symbolic ethnicity," a state in which symbols of the homeland are used to enact ethnicity, the concept is widely applicable. With the growth of communication technology, it is easy to maintain ties to a community even if you are unable to meet them regularly. Further, things such as ethnic food, films, and television are often used to strengthen one's ties to an ethnic community where one is distanced from that community.

The ties to a community that exists at some distance from its members are maintained through modern technology. Mike Featherstone (2001) has noted that cultural identities are increasingly becoming deterritorialized; the tie to a specific place is not as strong due to the fragmented nature of modern communities whose members may be scattered throughout the world.[4] Media are of the utmost importance to such communities, as recordings, television, and the internet maintain the connections between

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[2] See Appendix B.

[3] Herbert J. Gans, "Symbolic Ethnicity," in John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith, eds., *Ethnicity* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 154.

[4] Mike Featherstone, "Postnational Flows, Identity Formation and Cultural Space," in Eliezer Ben-Rafael and Yitzak Sternberg, eds., *Identity, Culture, and Globalization* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2001), p. 503.

members. Medicine Dream CDs and the group's website function in such a way. The CD of music addressing the issues facing the Mi'kmaq people is mobile and can be sent to any member of the Mi'kmaq or Native community, regardless of where he lives. This music can help to maintain the ties to a Native community when there is no surrounding Native population in which one finds membership. Further, the website is available to anyone with internet access and provides clips of music, links to other Native sites, and a guestbook through which Native people can contact one another and maintain their relationships with each other, even when one is distanced from one's own Native community.

Neuenfeldt's (2002) recent work on the marketing of Native recordings found that iconography used on such recordings normally reflects the tribal origins of the musicians rather than urban life.[5] The symbols chosen represent tribal affiliations and photographs often provide "more specific representations of individuals."[6] Here, as with determining how authentic music is **(Chapter Two)**, we find that the audience has an important role to play. The reception of music by the audience determines whether it is authentic and the reception of Native recordings dictates the design of its liner notes. The liner notes of *Tomegan Gospem* incorporate pictures of Paul Pike's ancestors in this manner. Paul is a Mi'kmaq and the symbols he uses are identifiable within that community. While the Mi'kmaq eight-point star on the cover of *Mawio'Mi* is a specific reference to his heritage

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[5] Karl Neuenfeldt, "www.nativeamericanmusic.com: Marketing Recordings in an Interconnected World," *The World of Music* 44 (2002), p. 117.

[6] Karl Neuenfeldt, "www.nativeamericanmusic.com," pp. 118-19.

and individual identity, it becomes a symbol of the band as a group. The use of such symbols on CDs, websites, and promotional posters is important in the portrayal of Native identity. Further, these symbols make "Nativeness" obvious to the buyer, as noted by Neuenfeldt.[7] This acts as an aid to CD sales, as the buyers know whether what they are purchasing is Native. Symbols like the quillwork from Paul's regalia may also aid the 'authentication' process for a buyer because the symbol emphasizes the Native connection of the recording.

On stage, Paul does not wear his regalia or the quillwork featured on the *Mawio'Mi* CD; however, his Native identity is shown through his dress. Dress is one way in which each member of the band can express an individual identity. Paul purposefully decided that while everyone in the band should wear something of his or her heritage, it need not be something as overt as buckskin and feathers. Instead, as a contemporary band he deemed it appropriate to wear vests to unify their look while each person's vest would be a unique expression of their heritage:

> We're trying to represent all these different cultures, all these different people. We don't want us all to look the same because as human beings, we're all unique. But we also want to show the pride of our own ethnic backgrounds that we come from when we do perform.[8]

Paul's vest is made of caribou hide and has bone beadwork on it. These materials are used

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[7] Karl Neuenfeldt, "www.nativeamericanmusic.com," p. 120.

[8] Paul Pike, Personal Interview, 2002.

because the Mi'kmaq people traditionally used caribou hides for clothing.[9]

Using clothing as a marker of identity is a politically motivated reaction to the oppression by colonizers. Europeans sent Native children to residential schools or boarding schools in an effort to assimilate them into the European way of life. Children were not only stripped of their language, history, and religion, but were also forced to cut their hair and wear Euro-American clothing.[10] In the reassertion of Native identity, the re-adoption of long hair and Native clothing is a strong expression of Nativeness and is a political reaction to hegemonic rule.

Both Gilbert "Buz" Daney and Steven Alvarez have worn ribbon shirts in performance. These shirts identify them as drummers of a particular group, such as the Sleeping Lady Drum Group of which Buz is a member. Again this clothing shows who they are and what they value in their lives. A Mescalero Apache, Steve wears turquoise and a bear's claw in performance, as well as eagle feathers in his long hair. When I asked Steve to tell me what he wears on stage and the significance of it, he explained: "I wear turquoise. It is part of the Apache tradition as the stone is believed to hold power. I also wear a bear's claw. The Apache believe that the bear is our cousin."[11] These symbols, then, are an expression of his heritage. Asked the same question, Buz noted that he wears

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[9] See Appendix C for photos from the concert at the Alaska Native Heritage Center on June 9th, 2002.

[10] Ward Churchill, "The Crucible of American Indian Identity: Native Tradition Versus Colonial Imposition in Postconquest North America," in Duane Champagne, ed., *Contemporary Native American Cultural Issues* (Walnut Creek, California: AltaMira Press, 1999), p. 51.

[11] Steven Alvarez, Personal E-mail, 2003.

his ivory wedding band on a chain around his neck at every concert. Artist James Afcan carved Buz's and his wife's wedding bands from the same piece of ivory and both display a carved rose. Buz noted that Uncle Walter Austin, a respected elder in Alaska, has said that the rose is a symbol for Native Americans.[12] During the Medicine Dream concert on 9 June 2002, Buz also wore a Medicine Dream hair clip around his pony tail that was created by the band's friend and supporter Don LaVonne.[13]

George Newton, part Aleut and part Inupiaq from Alaska, wears a vest of fur seal and a choker around his neck. This fur seal vest is particularly significant for George as it was his father's:

> It was a gift to my father. It has his initials on the inside, D.T.N, Donald T. Newton. I forget the lady who made it, she's from Nome, a very well-known artist. She made it for my father and we had one of our very first gigs to do, that was for Native Voices, I believe. Paul was like, maybe we'll wear something, some kind of regalia, not up there in suits and ties, something that represents your heritage. And my dad just pulled it out of the closet and he said, "Hey, how about you wear this?" It does not really cover my Aleut heritage, but more from the North, Inupiaq. It's just been really nice to wear.[14]

In wearing it, George is displaying who he is, both as an individual and as a member of the Native community. Further, in wearing a vest owned by his father, George is also

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[12] Gilbert "Buz" Daney, Personal E-mail, 2003.

[13] See discussion in **Chapter Two**.

[14] George Newton, Personal Interview, 2002.

reinforcing his familial ties.

Former band member, Cea Anderson, used her dress to portray the multiple aspects of her heritage. Showing her Aleut-Russian heritage, Cea wore a black, gold, and red belt that was woven by the Russians. Her black vest trimmed in fur was created by a friend, and Patrick Lind, a former Medicine Dream member, painted the scene depicted on it. Her beaded headpiece was made by a woman in Southeast Alaska. All of these items display Cea's background and connection to a community and to important individuals in her life. The connection continues to the drum that she plays on stage which she constructed with her daughter when she was four. This drum is made with deer skin because there are deer on Kodiak Island, the island where Cea's grandmother lived.

Thus far, we have considered how the Native members of Medicine Dream express their individual identities through dress. But how does this play out for the one non-Native member in the group? John Field enjoys the accepting atmosphere and strong sense of community exhibited by Alaska Natives and is happy to be part of a Native band. He is a musician first and foremost who enjoys playing good music. Tired of the bar scene which can be draining on a performer, he appreciates the stand for sobriety taken by the band. When asked if he wears anything from his heritage onstage, he revealed that he has no idea what to wear without looking ridiculous. He jokingly suggested that he wear a blond wig and horns to show his German and Scandinavian heritage. During our interactions, I suggested that he find his family's coat of arms and have it embroidered on his vest. He is currently considering this idea.

What colour, then, is John's vest? When John takes the stage, it is in a black vest,

seemingly without significance. When I asked why John chose to wear a black vest, he proudly and humourously replied, "Black is the colour of rock 'n' roll!" He listed a few musicians who were known for their black clothing, the most prominent being Johnny Cash.

In my interactions with John, he did not express any personal connection or experience that he relates to the themes found in Medicine Dream's music. For him, Medicine Dream has been a learning experience that teaches him more about Native American issues and Indigenous rights. He believes strongly that these issues need to be addressed and that music is the way to do so.

Sobriety became a mission statement of sorts for this band after Paul's friend K. C. LaFevre committed suicide, having lost his battle with drugs and alcohol. Alcohol has been particularly destructive among the Native population. As previously noted, it is for this reason that all of the proceeds from the sale of *Identity* were given to the K. C. LaFevre Memorial Fund and the band continues to make contributions to substance abuse programs. John pointed out that statistics show that Alaska has the highest per capita incidence of alcoholism of all the states. Further, he noted that the health problems associated with alcoholism, be they physical or sociological, are significantly high in Alaska. The belief among band members is that educating people about their identity is the path to sobriety: "We're trying to provide a positive message about being strong, learning about who you are, and where you come from, and not abusing alcohol and

drugs."[15]

This stand against alcohol among Native people has its roots in the peyote religion or the Native American Church, an outgrowth of the pan-Indian movement. It is a syncretic religion that combines the symbol of the cross and the Bible with peyote buttons, Native language, and the drum.[16] This position against alcohol was undertaken because of its destructive nature. Alcohol has been particularly damaging to Native culture and has claimed the lives of many Native people. Often alcohol is used as an anaesthetic to dull the senses against the 'soul wound' described by Eduardo Duran and Bonnie Duran.[17] Duran and Duran have noted that the health problems faced by many Native peoples result from psychological dysfunction. At the heart of this problem is the history of injustice and conquest perpetrated by colonizers. While the physical scars no longer exist, the memory of the past has wounded the spirit of the people, creating a 'soul wound'. Often alcohol is used to numb the symptoms of this 'soul wound' among people who know no other way of dealing with the problem.

Chief Arvol Looking Horse (1997), the nineteenth generation Keeper of the Sacred Pipe of the Lakota people, looks to healing as a way to break the dependence on

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[15] John Field, Personal Interview, 2002.

[16] Wendell H. Oswalt, *This Land Was Theirs*, p. 52.

[17] Bonnie Duran, Eduardo Duran, and Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart, "Native Americans and the Trauma of History," p. 67. See also Eduardo Duran and Bonnie Duran, *Native American Postcolonial Psychology* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1995).

alcohol that has plagued Native people.[18] He notes that Native people are lost spirits and have suffered alcoholism for years. Likewise, Paul points out that every time a person reaches for a bottle, he "[gives] up a piece of [his] spirit."[19] Alcohol is a significant factor leading to suicide, as well as domestic violence. It was introduced to the Native population by whites and used as a "tool of domination."[20] Duran and Duran (1995) note that during the years of trade, Euro-Americans exchanged alcohol for goods while modelling "aggressive and excessive alcohol use."[21] Having established a pattern of alcohol dependency, Euro-American powers prohibited alcohol (in Canada until 1953), thereby using it as a means of controlling Native people.

It is understandable, then, that one response to the negative effects of alcohol use among Native populations is an anti-alcohol stance which can be important to Native identity. Winning the battle against alcohol empowers Native people and displays their ability to take charge of their lives, no longer subservient to the dominant culture. C. Roderick Wilson and R. Bruce Morrison have noted that, "Symbolically, one of the most

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[18] Lois Crozier-Hogle, Darryl Babe Wilson, and Chief Arvol Looking Horse, "Arvol Looking Horse: Mending the Sacred Hoop," in Lois Crozier-Hogle, Darryl Babe Wilson, and Jay Leibold, eds., *Surviving in Two Worlds: Contemporary Native American Voices* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997), p. 37.

[19] Anne Owens, "Traditional Band Spreads Sobering Message," *Arizona Daily Wildcat*, Feb 13, 2002.

[20] Eduardo Duran and Bonnie Duran, *Native American Postcolonial Psychology*, p. 103.

[21] Eduardo Duran and Bonnie Duran, *Native American Postcolonial Psychology*, p. 103.

important areas of Native renewal is their growing success in controlling alcohol abuse."[22] In working towards sobriety, Native peoples are combatting the negative stereotype that surrounds them regarding alcohol and are asserting a different identity to the general population. For this reason, Medicine Dream, as well as other musicians such as rap artist Litefoot, emphasize the need to break the connections to alcohol.

Buz spoke to the importance of sobriety as a first step towards wellness for Native peoples. For Buz, sobriety does not only mean abstinence from alcohol and drugs, but also from other damaging behaviours. According to Buz, sobriety frees him from his obsessions and his anger, permitting a new beginning. Sobriety, then, is not the end of alcohol and drug abuse, but the beginning of healing and the opportunity to revive a Native culture free of substance abuse.

The liner notes of Medicine Dream's most recent CD with Canyon Records reinforce their Native heritage and Native culture, which are essential to their identity. Those of *Tomegan Gospem* emphasize the role of elders in Native communities. They are honoured people who "pass on stories to us and they help teach us about who we are and where we came from."[23] Further, it points out the importance of giving in a Native community, a value featured in give-aways at powwows and potlatch ceremonies: "When a member of our community is in need, we don't turn our backs on them, we hold on to

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[22] C. Roderick Wilson and R. Bruce Morrison, "Taking Stock: Legacies and Prospects," in R. Bruce Morrison and C. Roderick Wilson, eds., *Native Peoples: The Canadian Experience* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1995), p. 616-17.

[23] Medicine Dream, *Mawio 'Mi*, Canyon Records (2000).

our traditional ways and by 'giving' of ourselves, in this way we also bring blessings to our own families."[24] These Native values are presented as a common characteristic of all Native peoples, a common identity among diverse heritages.

The importance of family is stressed in Native communities and is a significant aspect of Medicine Dream's music. Their CDs are dedicated to family and friends, and usually include lengthy lists of family members. The song "Missing You" was composed for "msit nokamaq", literally meaning "all my relations," an expression used by many Native people to indicate that we are all family, all related to one another.[25] "Missing You" begins with vocables, followed by Mi'kmaq text and then an English translation that expresses the love Paul has for his family and that he will return to them. "Msit Nokamaq," a track from the first CD with Canyon Records entitled *Mawio'Mi* (*Gathering*), is an instrumental piece that incorporates vocables; neither the Mi'kmaq or English language are sung in this song. In this case, the vocables and flute are expressing the connectedness of all people. The use of vocables is significant here; it can be difficult to express the emotions one feels regarding one's family. Vocables provide a means of expressing these complex emotions, as Paul points out. They are sounds that express emotion without the use of words that interfere.

David P. McAllester in 1981 noted that having been formerly stripped of their music, language, religion, dress, and other aspects of their culture, Native peoples today

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[24] Medicine Dream, *Tomegan Gospem*, Canyon Records (2002).

[25] Medicine Dream, *Tomegan Gospem*.

use vocables specific to their musical traditional (such as we, he, ya, ho) as a way of marking their identity and ethnicity.[26] While this was not voiced as the reason for vocables in the case of Medicine Dream, they do fulfill this purpose. The use of the Mi'kmaq language is an indicator of identity and speaks to a specific audience, one that can understand Mi'kmaq. On a larger scale, however, it speaks to the Native community as a way in which Native people are countering oppressive rule. Like the French in Quebec who want to be known as a distinct society, Native people see language to be a marker of distinctiveness. The use of the Mi'kmaq language, then, marks the group as Native and more specifically marks Paul as a Mi'kmaq.

Paul wrote "People of the Dawn" as an expression of solidarity with all indigenous peoples who have lost land to European powers and whose treaties securing their land rights have not been upheld.[27] Similarly, "We Belong" was composed for Alaska Natives fighting for their land rights and for sovereignty.[28] Its lyrics best express the Native position on the European encroachment of their lands:

> Since time immemorial, say the people of this land,
> We care about our Mother, we care and understand,
> That the poisoning of life and the taking of our lands,
> You can't justify the arrogance. We belong to this land.

An anthem to support land claims, this song also expresses the desire for Native people to be able to live in traditional ways and express their Native identity. "And with this prayer,

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[26] David P. McAllester, "New Perspectives," p. 434.

[27] Medicine Dream, *Tomegan Gospem*. Complete text is reproduced in **Chapter One**.

[28] Medicine Dream, *Mawio'Mi*.

we pray for peace and understanding, that we might be free to be ourselves."

Sovereignty and self-determination are important issues for Native peoples. Paul wrote "If We Were Wolves" to express "the frustration of trying to be free as an Indigenous person in North America" where tribal sovereignty has been lost to "the hands of law makers and even average citizens."[29] The striking message of this song, "If we were wolves, we'd be on endangered lists," points out the situation of Native peoples. They are an oppressed people whose culture is being lost as they lose their rights; they have no one taking up their cause and fighting for their survival. Yet, people take up the cause of endangered animals all the time. Why not endangered peoples? Paul notes,

> We've often heard or read about how people, environmentalists, will chain themselves to the front of a ship to protect whales, and other indigenous creatures, wolves or whatever. But you rarely see anyone standing up to protect indigenous peoples in the same way. It's just kind of interesting, but if indigenous people were wolves, we'd be all in endangered lists. It was this tongue-in-cheek kind of look at it.[30]

Sovereignty is essential for Native peoples to be able to make decisions as a people and live life as they wish, to freely express their Native identity.

A major roadblock to this sovereignty is the misinformation that has been preached in Euro-American schools. Negative stereotypes of Native peoples have continued through the years and been reinforced by the dominant sector of society. Christopher A. Scales (1999) found that contemporary Native music was a forum for contesting negative stereotypes and empowering Native peoples. This is supported by the present study of the

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[29] Medicine Dream, *Mawio'Mi*.

[30] Paul Pike, Personal Interview, 2002.

music of Medicine Dream. The assertion of identity through song, as described above, empowers Native peoples. Paul's song "Hurtful Stories" addresses the false truths told to students in Newfoundland schools until the 1980s.[31] Textbooks stated what has since been termed the "Mercenary Myth" – that the Mi'kmaq people were paid by European powers to exterminate the Beothuk:

> There's a mercenary myth that was put on the Mi'kmaq people of Newfoundland. They were told for generations that they were the ones who killed off the Beothuk people. And the Chief in Council in Miawpukek, which is Conne River, Newfoundland, challenged it in court, I think in the eighties. And in French and Newfoundland records, they could not find anywhere any proof that any of these things were ever done, they were English hearsay. So because there was no proof that any of it ever existed, they took it out of the history books. But generations of people have already been told that, "By the way, you are the descendent of a mercenary, and you guys killed all the Beothuks." So there's this huge shame and guilt that's passed down through the generations, which they call generational grief, and a lot of people don't even want to identify with being Mi'kmaq, just because of those things. They weren't educated any other way. They thought, "Well, it's in the book, it must be true." So we're trying to educate people now that we're not savages.[32]

In "Hurtful Stories," Paul educates his audience about this false truth and explains that the Mi'kmaq and the Beothuk lived amicably among each other and intermarried. By addressing this issue, Paul is attempting to change the stereotype of the Newfoundland Mi'kmaq from that of murderer, thereby asserting a Native identity of a peaceful people. He is voicing an alternate interpretation of history; a version put forth and upheld by the

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[31] Medicine Dream, *Tomegan Gospem*.

[32] Paul Pike, Personal Interview, 2002. For more on the mercenary myth, see Harald E. L. Prins, "We Fight with Dignity: The Miawpukek Mi'kmaq Quest for Aboriginal Rights in Newfoundland," in *Algonquian Conference* (1998), pp. 283-305, and Dennis A. Bartels, "Ktaqamkuk Iluni Saqimawoutie: Aboriginal Rights and the Myth of the Micmac Mercenaries in Newfoundland," in Bruce Alden Cox, ed., *Native People, Native Lands* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1988), pp. 32-36.

subaltern population in opposition to the dominant culture.

Through his music, Paul is telling stories to teach Natives and non-Natives about their history. In *Keeping Slug Woman Alive*, Greg Sarris (1993) looks at Native American texts and the functions they fulfill. He finds storytelling is an important aspect of many cultures and, in general, can be used for a variety of purposes:

> Storytelling is a fundamental aspect of culture, and stories are used in a number of ways and for a multitude of purposes. Stories can work as cultural indexes for appropriate or inappropriate behaviour. They can work to oppress or to liberate, to confuse or to enlighten. So much depends on who is telling the story and who is listening and the specific circumstances of the exchange.[33]

Paul's stories, conveyed in song, have a didactic purpose; they are meant to teach listeners about culture and alternate accounts of history. Further, they are political and attempt to raise awareness about political issues, such as Native rights to land. Their messages, which reflect Native culture and beliefs, model the behaviours valued among Native people, such as strong connections to family and respect for Elders.

The previous paragraphs have dealt with the textual markers of identity that appear in the music of Medicine Dream, themes and references which address Native issues and assert Nativeness. How do the actions of the musicians in performance display a Native identity?

The use of tobacco and the prayer at the start of each concert is significant.

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[33] Greg Sarris, *Keeping Slug Woman Alive: A Holistic Approach to American Indian Texts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), p. 4.

Traditionally, tobacco has been used for blessing, as payment, to cement agreements, and as medicine.[34] Pego, Hill, Solomon, Chisholm, and Ivy (1999) note that tobacco is an important symbol used for ceremony. The specific use of tobacco in this case, however, is best described by Paul:

> We always say a prayer before we perform, usually for if someone is struggling or having a hard time, or for a family member, or anything. In the traditional way, we pray with tobacco. Tobacco is like an offering and for what the drum represents, of all our cultures, we pay respects to the drum when we go out there. Even though it's not a blessed drum, we still treat it with that same respect. So, before we go to our different instruments, that's the first thing we do, we pay respects to the drum with that prayer in our hand, and we put that tobacco on the drum. It's all symbolic. But we do that and it seems to give us that much more of a unity – I don't know, I can't explain it. Something happens, people . . . feel something when they're [at a Medicine Dream concert]. There's like a vibration in the room.[35]

This act, then, is an important part of the performance process which incorporates tradition and brings unity to the group.

The act of singing as one Native identity was particularly emphasized by Buz in his interview as the way that the music of Medicine Dream gives expression to an individual's identity. When asked how Medicine Dream and its music expresses who Buz

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[34] Christina Pego, Robert E. Hill, Glenn W. Solomon, Robert M. Chisholm, and Suzanne E. Ivey, "Tobacco, Culture, and Health Among Native Americans: A Historical Review," in Duane Champagne, ed., *Contemporary Native American Cultural Issues* (Walnut Creek, California: AltaMira Press, 1999), pp. 252-53.

[35] Paul Pike, Personal Interview, 2002.

Daney is as a person, his identity, he replied:

> It simply does. As a being, as a person, anybody singing songs that are composed [expresses his own identity through them]. The universe is one song, so we get these fragments and these pieces that Paul artfully arranges. And as a person singing that and expressing it in that way, it reaches back to the universe. So it's very multidimensional. And of course I feel good when I'm doing that, but any person singing would experience something wonderful. So, that's it. Just a being, a person, who's chanting a song that has some meaning relevant to the universe.[36]

Individuals join the song of the universe though the act of singing and are a meaningful part of the universe. As a group, they express the song of all Natives, of all people. However, this is only possible with individuals who participate in this way. Thus, individual identities are necessary for the existence of a collective identity.

Important to a collective identity is the creation of collective memory. Mark Mattern (1999) has noted that the powwow is a space where unity and diversity among Native peoples can be negotiated. It also allows for the reinforcement and reproduction of Native identity.[37] While differences are acknowledged and debated, the powwow ultimately plays a unifying role. This unification of participants is cultivated by the emcee who informs the participants of the significance of each song and dance. His words often are meant to invoke collective memory as he dedicates songs to elders and specific events in the history of Native people, such as the battle at Wounded Knee.[38] Mattern is careful to note, however, that often the common history and memory that is cultivated is

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[36] Gilbert "Buz" Daney, Personal Interview, 2002.

[37] Mark Mattern, "The Powwow as a Public Arena," p. 129.

[38] Mark Mattern, "The Powwow as a Public Arena," p. 131-32.

only partially common to all participants. It is the use of stories and description that creates a collective memory.

In much the same way that an emcee calls events and meanings into the minds of participants to which they relate, Paul describes events and explains the significance of songs to his audience. In these stories of oppression, the audience members, both Native and non-Native, Alaskan and non-Alaskan, ranging in age from small children to elders, find something to which they relate. Though the cultivation of collective memory, experiences that can be seen as universals among Native peoples are called into the minds of the audience members, and they find some 'truth' in Paul's performance and stories even though his stories specifically refer to the experience of the Mi'kmaq people. Like an emcee at a powwow, Paul introduces songs and explains who is being honoured with each song. Further, when describing the events that occurred in Newfoundland, he relates them to those that occurred in Alaska, helping to create a general consciousness. For example, when Paul talks about the residential schools in Newfoundland, he reminds the audience that in Alaska the residential schools were called boarding schools, something to which they can relate.

The reminder of similar events between Newfoundland and Alaska call into mind a collective memory of events and was used to introduce the song "People of the Dawn" at the Medicine Dream concert I attended. Following the song "Tomegan Gospem," Paul explained:

> Back where I'm from, Mi'kmaq people are known as the People of the Dawn. And a lot of them, like many other nations, even here in Alaska, many people have had a lot of wrongful things said about them over the

> generations and in the history book and what not. I kept picturing for myself, for my own culture, a little boy or a little girl looking on the Internet and looking up stories of the Newfoundland Micmac or Mi'kmaq people and constantly seeing these untrue stories of mercenaries and I wanted to try to tell our Elder's side of the story on some of the songs on this CD. And this song is called "People of the Dawn" and I hope that you enjoy it.[39]

In such a way, a song that is specific to a particular group of people, the Mi'kmaq, is understood by an audience that does not include Mi'kmaq people but who still are able to relate to the stories told by Paul.

Individual identities, then, find expression in the collective identity cultivated in contemporary Native music. This is possible because people have many groups with which they identify at one time. The Native members of Medicine Dream, it has been shown, have both a tribal identity and an over-arching Native identity. The tribal identity is expressed in the collective identity in various ways, such as individual dress. The more general identity as a Native person is possible because of the similarity of experience shared by oppressed peoples, such as loss of land, sovereignty, language, religion, *et cetera*.

These shared experiences find expression in contemporary Native music, through lyrics and musical language. The use of Native language can serve as an indicator of both individual identity to the person who understands that particular language and collective identity to the general audience that recognizes it as a Native language. Vocables also express Native identity and clearly mark music as Native. Using lyrics, as well as the

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[39] Observed at the Medicine Dream Concert, 9 June 2002, at the Alaska Native Heritage Centre.

liner notes of CDs, to discuss Native issues and themes expresses both the specific experience of one tribe and the general experience of all tribes because of the similarity of experience.

In terms of musical characteristics, the singing and drumming in powwow style are of a general nature expressing a collective identity. Powwow style has become a general style understood by those who attend powwows. It diminishes the regional style characteristics as specific markers of tribal identity and emphasizes the collective identity as Natives. The use of such music is likely a direct outgrowth of pan-Indianism.

With regards to the contemporary aspect of the music, or the non-Native aspects, the elements of pop and rock that are incorporated into the music by Paul can express both an individual and collective identity. Everyone is exposed to this style of music and can relate to it on a variety of levels. For Paul, however, it is his history as a musician and as a person who grew up as a non-Native. Therefore it specifically expresses his experiences as the composer of the music.

Contemporary Native music, then, is a site where identities are in constant flux and negotiation. The individual identity can be seen as something specific against the background of the general collective identity. The collective identity is a space into which the individual identity fits. It relies on these individual identities to complete it, as Buz pointed out, because each individual joins into a common song. However, this common song relies on the individuals to give it a voice. It is in this collective voice that Natives join together and are empowered to contest stereotypes that exist and replace them with the Native identity of their choice.

Conclusion

The previous chapters have shown the inter-related nature of identity, one's surroundings and place in society, and the various ways in which identity can be performed for or displayed to others. Surrounding the performance of identity is a multifaceted richness which informs the music itself, primarily through verbal information, via liner notes and spoken descriptions and explanations in concert, and through the visual aspects of the concert and promotional materials. Contemporary Native music, as expressed by Medicine Dream, is more than sound. It is a profoundly meaningful musical genre through which their Native identities can be understood.

One first step to such an understanding is via the text of the songs. These words are significant in that they voice a Native perspective on history and culture. Through them, one can understand what is important to Native culture, what is valued in a Native lifestyle. Further, one can hear an alternative to the dominant culture's version of events. Untruths such as the Mercenary Myth are refuted, and the Native side of the story is told, reeducating the audience. Finally, one is exposed to a political message in a medium that makes the criticism it expresses more palatable, in the hope that it will be heard, understood, and supported.

The songs are contextualized by additional text, sometimes written and sometimes spoken, which further expresses and explains a Native identity. The liner notes which accompany CDs provide details that aid the understanding of the song texts. They point to specific events in history that were the impetus for composing such songs and they reinforce Native values and ideals. In a similar manner, spoken information in concert

provides a context in which the message of the song is heard and understood. In a manner similar to that observed at a powwow in which an emcee encourages a collective memory through his speech, the words of Paul expressed via liner notes and on-stage narratives between songs reinforce the similar experiences of all Native people, constructing a collective memory, thereby allowing for a collective identity to emerge.

Visual cues as to identity can speak even stronger than words. As such, an understanding of identity necessarily requires that one examine the visual aspect of recordings and performances. Such visual aspects as CD covers and clothing worn in performance have much to tell about Native identity and can reinforce both an individual identity and a collective identity at the same time, as has been noted with the use of the eight-point Mi'kmaq star featured on the *Mawio'Mi* CD, the Medicine Dream website, and the jewellery created by the band's friend and supporter Don LaVonne. Ritual in performance also has a role to play in understanding Native culture, seen in the action of praying to the drum with tobacco before each performance. Such interrelated visual and narrative aspects of contemporary Native music make that music profoundly meaningful.

Through the poetics of song we encounter the importance of place to identity. Where one is from, where one calls home, where one belongs are all references to place that are linked to who a person is. By naming a particular place, singing in a language specific to a region, or mentioning political leaders from a specific place, music expresses an identity particular to a locale or a relationship to a particular region. The universality of the same music is found in themes which cross boarders into the common experience of all Native peoples. English as a universal language which bridges the divide between

languages specific to tribes, and vocables as a universal expression of emotion, make contemporary Native music unbound from particular places for some listeners. Likewise, inter-tribal vocals and powwow drumming are part of a collective Native identity, rather than one specific to a region or group, and add to the placeless nature of the music.

Such music may be presented against a background of popular music, thereby achieving a balance between the two, as is the case with the music of Medicine Dream. This combination is illuminated by the writings of DuBois and countless others who note the complex identity that emerges when a person experiences double consciousness. An effort is made to find a place to stand in two incongruous worlds, to assert ones own identity. It is reaction against viewing oneself through the lens of the dominant culture.

Through such exposure to diverse and distinct lifeways and musical traditions, the musician is presented with, or perhaps forced to hear, a variety of musical styles. However, in determining how such influences affect his own music, he displays agency. This agency exists within a framework in which the record company, the audience, fellow band members, and radio stations, among others, all have a part to play in a musician's output. In the case of Medicine Dream, it is Paul Pike who decides how to use elements of traditional and non-traditional music for creative or political ends, how the two distinct styles will be placed together and balanced.

This combination of styles is not the only reaction a musician may have to being surrounded by the musical styles of others. Some musicians see it as an opportunity to reaffirm Native tradition by remaining impervious to mainstream music. Others may fully adopting the mainstream style. This does not mean that either denies the existence of the

other, or rejects it. Rather, one style is purposefully chosen over the other to achieve a goal, whether that be the continuation of tradition or reaching a broader audience base through mainstream music. Some musicians, however, attempt to mend the two into an art-form that expresses the truth of their experience as people with a foot in each world. When they are successful in this and when they are successful in validating the experiences of others, their audience considers their music to be authentic. Native identity, then, exists in a state of constant negotiation, where the boundaries that exist between tradition and modernity, Native lifestyle and that of the dominant culture, and the old and the new are flexible. These boundaries are in constant flux as Natives increasingly challenge the identity that has been ascribed to them and attempt to recreate an identity for themselves. Each pairing, however, does not represent discrete categories of a dichotomy. Instead, they are labels that represent two opposites along a continuum whose definitions change depending on one's perspective. Between these extremes is a blurred line where cross-over occurs.

It is this cross-over that manifests musically as contemporary Native music, like that of the group Medicine Dream. Such music is constructed to blend elements of traditional Native music with mainstream pop and rock, in an effort to show the multiple influences that surround Native musicians. This music is the result of the attempt to negotiate one's place between two worlds.

These conclusions are drawn from the combination of my interaction with the members of Medicine Dream and the work of previous scholars who have addressed issues of identity. They are my conclusions, based on that which I learned from the

people I met in Alaska. My identity as a Newfoundlander and family friend of the Pike's in Corner Brook provided the opportunity to meet Paul and be introduced to his music, while my role as a university student interested in learning about Native music led to a closer relationship with Paul, that of student and teacher.

When I first contacted Paul to determine whether he would be interested in taking on the role of teacher for this study, he told me that he was willing to do so because he believed it was important for someone in my position to learn about contemporary Native music and culture, and present it to the academic realm – an audience which might not encounter Paul or his music any other way. Further, he felt it was important that someone assert a contemporary Native position on identity and the issues that Native people have faced. He hoped that through me, his message would reach more people. For that reason, I have included discussion of such untruths as the Mercenary Myth, in the hope that the people of Newfoundland will come to realise that the Mi'kmaq people did not exterminate the Beothuk Nation. In discussing how the term contemporary does not imply non-traditional, I encourage non-Natives to consider the changing and adaptive nature of their culture and traditions, and permit Natives to take on a modern identity, rather than perpetuating that of the past. By pointing out what Paul calls the "colonial" nature of Newfoundland, I hope to alert the readers of this thesis to the fact that though Newfoundland is presented as a homogeneous culture of Celtic origins, a multitude of heritages exist, and it is this multi-culturalism that should be embraced.

I have used concepts and premises that are central to Western academic discourse as tools to shape my understanding of what Paul and the members of Medicine Dream

have taught me. In such a way, my study of contemporary Native music enters into the realm of academia, and the ideas, themes, and messages held within Paul's music are conveyed to scholars who are engaged in this discourse.

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Appendix A

Ex. 1. "Raven the Creator" by John Hoover, located at the Alaska Native Heritage Center. Picture courtesy John Field.

Ex. 2. Silver eagle feather earrings by Don LaVonne.

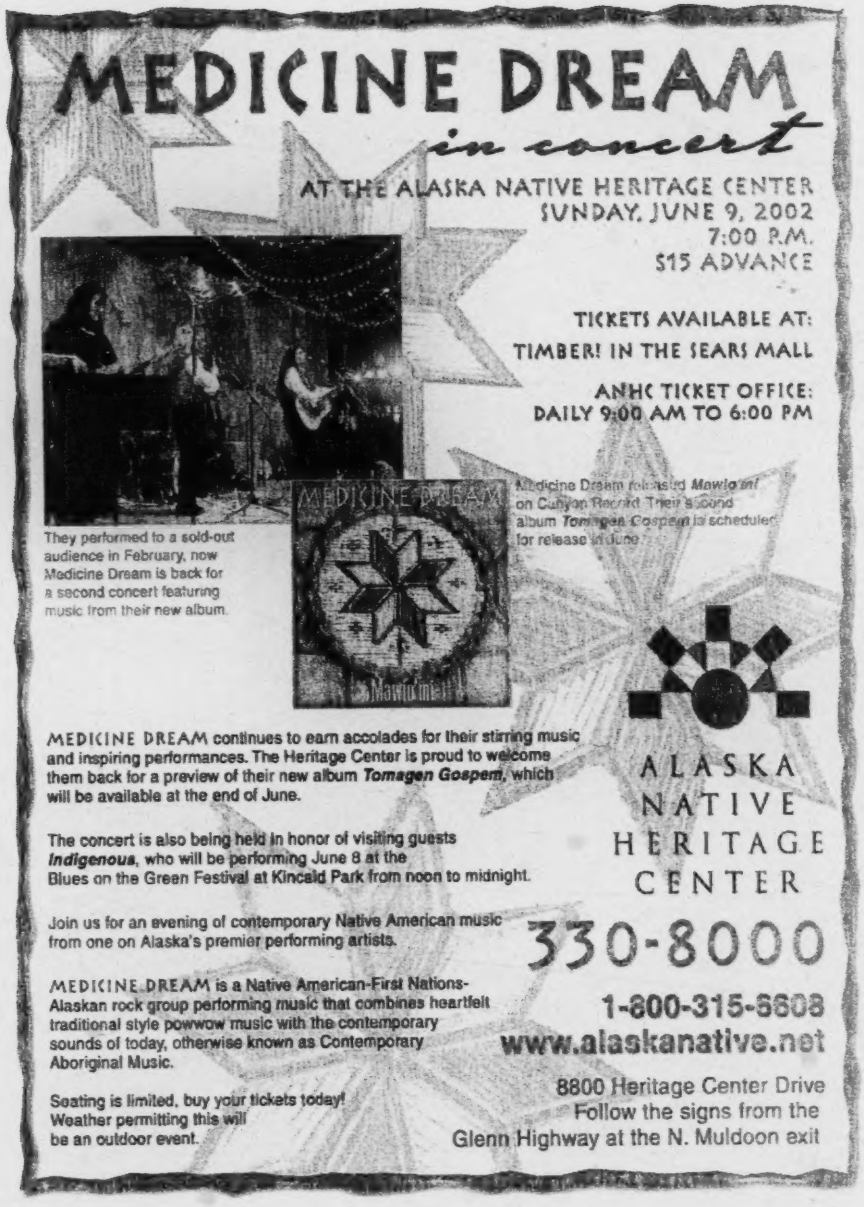
Appendix B

Ex. 3. Paul in his regalia at the Chickaloon Powwow.
Note the Mi'kmaq eight-point star on his hip.

Ex. 4. The cover of *Mawio'Mi*, courtesy of Canyon Records.
This is the same one from Paul's regalia (above), made by Paul.

Ex. 5. The cover of *Tomegan Gospem*, courtesy of Canyon Records. This features a birchbark carving by Paul. Note that half of the Mi'kmaq eight-point star is featured on the right side of the carving.

Ex.6. Clip art from Medicine Dream Webpage, once again featuring the eight-point star.


MEDICINE DREAM
in concert
AT THE ALASKA NATIVE HERITAGE CENTER
SUNDAY, JUNE 9, 2002
7:00 P.M.
$15 ADVANCE
TICKETS AVAILABLE AT:
TIMBER! IN THE SEARS MALL
ANHC TICKET OFFICE:
DAILY 9:00 AM TO 6:00 PM
They performed to a sold-out audience in February, now Medicine Dream is back for a second concert featuring music from their new album.
MEDICINE DREAM continues to earn accolades for their stirring music and inspiring performances. The Heritage Center is proud to welcome them back for a preview of their new album Tomagen Gospem, which will be available at the end of June.
The concert is also being held in honor of visiting guests Indigenous, who will be performing June 8 at the Blues on the Green Festival at Kincaid Park from noon to midnight.
Join us for an evening of contemporary Native American music from one on Alaska's premier performing artists.
MEDICINE DREAM is a Native American-First Nations-Alaskan rock group performing music that combines heartfelt traditional style powwow music with the contemporary sounds of today, otherwise known as Contemporary Aboriginal Music.
Seating is limited, buy your tickets today! Weather permitting this will be an outdoor event.
ALASKA NATIVE HERITAGE CENTER
330-8000
1-800-315-6608
www.alaskanative.net
8800 Heritage Center Drive
Follow the signs from the Glenn Highway at the N. Muldoon exit

Ex. 7. Poster used to promote the concert on June 9th, 2002.

Appendix C

Ex. 8. Medicine Dream concert at the Alaska Native Heritage Centre on 9 June 2002. From left, John Field (keyboards), Andrew Mullen (bass, filling in for Lauri Kidd), Cea Anderson (vocals), Steve Alvarez (percussion), Paul (guitar), Buz Daney (vocals and traditional drum), and George Newton (acoustic and electric guitar).

Ex. 9. Another shot of Medicine Dream. This time Paul is playing Native flute.

Ex. 10. Medicine Dream gathers around the powwow drum to sing a traditional style song composed by Paul.

Ex. 11. After the concert, the band poses with me for one final group picture. From left, me, George Newton, John Field, Steven Alvarez, Cea Anderson, Paul Pike, Buz Daney.

Appendix D

Paul Pike (b. September 11, 1968)

Paul Pike was born in Corner Brook, Newfoundland in 1968. As a child, he played drum kit and later guitar, both self-taught. As a young adult, he played in different bands, that were predominantly rock-oriented, including Dawn Patrol, Back to Back, and Fear of Flying. He says he always felt Native, identifying himself with Aboriginal culture. But, Paul was raised in a Catholic community and attended the Catholic high school. Throughout his childhood, he enjoyed many of the activities that were traditional to Native culture, such as hunting and fishing. Nine years ago, he went to the tribal band office to trace his heritage and discovered a geneology that proved to his family that they were Mi'kmaq. Since then, his family has been very supportive of his desire to learn more about their roots.

In 1990, Paul moved to Alaska and performed in many rock-oriented bands there, including Shaker, The Defectors, Chaser, The Cat's Meow, Davinci, and AB Plus, among others. Soon he became involved in the Native culture there, while continuing to learn more about his own heritage as a Mi'kmaq from Newfoundland by travelling to the Atlantic provinces and engaging in the Native communities there. He taught himself to play the Native American flute by sitting with a guitar tuner and trying out fingerings to see which pitches they made.

In 1995, after the death of close friend K.C. LaFevre, Paul formed the band Medicine Dream in Anchorage, AK, with original members Cea Anderson, George Newton, and Buz Daney, among others. Their first songs were about and inspired by

K.C., "Lightning Flashes the Sky" and "True Friends." They recorded their first album, *Identity*, independently in 1998 at Surreal Studios in Anchorage, AK. It featured both music and poetry. In 1999, Paul travelled to home to Corner Brook to participate in the opening ceremonies of the Canada Winter Games, representing the Mi'kmaq people of Newfoundland.

In 2000, the music from *Identity*, combined with some new tracks, was released by Canyon Records on *Mawio'Mi*. By this time, John Field had joined the group. This album was nominated for three Native American Music Awards and Medicine Dream performed at the awards show in Albuquerque, New Mexico in November 2000. During the summer of 2001, the band travelled to Ireland for World Peace and Prayer Day and performed a successful tour throughout Arizona.

Steven Alvarez joined the band as their new percussionist in 2001. In 2002, the group released their second album with Canyon Records, entitled *Tomegan Gospem*. Their new music was featured at both their CD release party and their concert in Salem, Massachusetts at the Peabody Essex Museum. In February 2003, the band was named Native Artist of the Month on a nation program entitled Native America Calling.

While maintaining an active performing career and participating in cultural events, Paul continues his personal mission of education. He has been a guest speaker at Sir Wilfred Grenfell College in Corner Brook, where he spoke to nursing students about providing culturally-sensitive care (2001). That same year he travelled around Newfoundland presenting cultural workshops for the Federation of Newfoundland Indians. For five years in Alaska, he facilitated cultural education workshops for the

Cook Inlet Tribal Council, speaking in numerous venues to a variety of age groups. Paul currently works as a substance abuse counsellor at The Hudson Lake Healing Camp in Alaska. He has returned to Corner Brook to organize and participate in the Elmastukwek Mi'kmaq Mawio'Mi (1999, 2000), which he hopes will become an annual event in the future.